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New Masses

Jim Farley's Festival

By MARGUERITE YOUNG

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By JOHN MULLEN

Arkansas Terror

By JOSEPHINE JOHNSON

With Drawings by Joe Jones

Homage to Maxim Gorky

by MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

Romantic Lovers of the Revolution

by JOSHUA KUNITZ

London Times on Proletarian Literature

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We

have received a warm response from many readers to our previous requests in this matter, but we must make it again, for we have reached our limit. From political prisoners, from unpaid workers in the labor movement who cannot afford the price, from workers' schools all over the country, which find it a hard enough struggle to pay the rent, calls come to NEW MASSES for gift subscriptions.

We have made these gifts but we cannot afford to add to a list that already burdens our resources. Yet, it is there that NEW MASSES is vitally needed. For many political prisoners, NEW MASSES is the only way by which they can maintain contact with the revolutionary movement. For the worker in the labor movement, NEW MASSES has proved to be a valuable tool for recruiting and organizing. In the workers' schools, NEW MASSES has often proved the most popular and appealing literature for workers making their first approach to the militant labor movement.

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New Masses

JUNE 30, 1936

The Communist Convention

WHEN men as diverse as Westbrook Pegler, Langston Hughes and Heywood Broun join organized labor groups in greeting the Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party, now in session in New York City, it is a significant sign of the times. It means that the convention is of importance not only to the labor movement but to every progressive-minded American.

The very character of the delegates gives the convention distinction in the political life of our country. Compare the machine-politicians at Cleveland and Philadelphia with the workers, farmers, Negroes, intellectuals, women and students gathered in New York to check up on policies and to discuss programs for furthering the interests of all working people in the United States.

This convention finds the Communist Party stronger in numbers and influence than at any previous time in its seventeen years of existence. The Party has become a recognized factor in the political and economic life of the United States, and its record is winning it new friends and supporters every day.

On the one hand, it has consistently fought for an independent policy to be pursued by the American working class and its allies; on the other hand, it has avoided separating itself from the main currents in the labor movement. That is why even those who disagree with the principles of the Communist Party recognize it and its Ninth Convention as forces for *rallying and unifying the workers, the farmers and middle-class people in the fight against increasing reaction and fascism.* This unity is the convention watchword.

THE convention will nominate candidates for president and vice-president of the United States. Earlier this year, the Communist Party participated in attempts to launch a national Farmer-Labor ticket. These plans came to nothing because certain labor leaders decided to support Roosevelt. Subsequently, the Communists submitted proposals for a joint national ticket with the Socialist Party. The Socialists rejected these proposals. Now in putting forward its own candidates, the Communist Party has explained that it will use the election campaign not only to strengthen its own forces, but to keep on working indefatigably for unity and the united front against reaction.

THE NEW MASSES greets the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party. With our readers, we look forward to the important discussions and decisions. We are sure that everyone who sincerely wants to defeat the reaction will watch and study the proceedings and results of this convention of working America. For the Communist Party stands out today as the most persistent and determined fighter for the united front, for progressive trade unionism, for the Farmer-Labor Party, for the defense of democratic rights and civil liberties. It stands before the American people today as that party which day in and out defends their best interests.

"Yeah, well Macfadden says it cures economic ills!"

J. Serrano

Lemke and Landon

JUST after the Republican convention closed and just before the Democratic convention opened, Father Coughlin, Dr. Townsend and Congressman Lemke popped up with the Union Party. The program of this "third" party is every bit as reactionary as that which the Hearst-Liberty-League-Republican crowd produced at Cleveland. Some planks are even more brazen in their defense of Wall Street's interests. The platform supports the autocratic power of the Supreme Court, upholds States' rights for the purpose of preventing federal social legislation and in urging huge expenditures for the army, navy and air corps calls not only for "adequate" but for "perfect defense."

Heywood Broun characterized this "third party" program precisely when he said it follows the Hitler formula: "there is the attack on the bankers and the radicals; there is the appeal for complete isolation and two hundred percent nationalism."

If anyone knows the real purpose

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this "third" party, it is Father Coughlin. He let the cat out of the bag last Saturday in an exclusive interview with the New York Sun, Liberty League organ. The fascist priest said there was a trong possibility that the Union Party would cause a split in the Democratic nd progressive ranks and cause the lection of Alfred M. Landon. Coughin went further, according to the Sun, nd "made it quite clear without actually saying it, that as between Roosevelt and his New Deal, he would prefer the election of the Kansan."

The Coughlins, Lemkes and Smiths seek to play upon the desire of the mass of the American people for a genuine political movement representing their needs. But the pro-Landon Union Party is not the answer to these needs. Neither is the blank check which some labor leaders have issued to Roosevelt. The way for the mass of the people to assert their real desires in this campaign is through local and state Farmer-Labor Parties, and through the building of a national Farmer-Labor Party.

A Note on Schmeling

THE Nazi papers gave Max Schmeling a freezing send-off when he sailed for his bout with Joe Louis. Streicher's sheet alone put in a word for Max, stating that even if he lost, the outcome should be discounted because, after all, Negroes are closer to apes than to humans. The roundhouse rights which sent Joe down in the fourth sent Max's racial integrity soaring in the hearts of his most prominent countrymen. *Der Angriff* turned expert with the theory that "courage and self-discipline play a bigger role in fights than physical qualities. . . . Schmeling has won against the primitive fighting instinct of the Negro." The boxer is now being considered for the German Order of Merit, created by Hitler, as well as for the honorary commandership of a Schutzstaffel detachment.

Schmeling himself rose to the occaion with his statement to the New *Tork* Herald Tribune, "I would not let any Negro beat me," and his interview with the *Lokalanzeiger,* "I knew that the Fuehrer's thoughts were with me. . . . Please tell Germany that this is the happiest day of my life. . . . When I sha[ll] be allowed to face the Fuehrer [ ] still a happier moment."

[ ]of the fact that at the [ ]m the ordinary require[-] [ ]manship were of necessity scrupulously observed, there is no doubt that the Nazis are making "racial" and political propaganda of a simple boxing victory. According to The Herald Tribune correspondent, "A high German official who is also a Nazi party member, expressed the view that Schmeling's victory would do more than ten years of diplomacy for the betterment of German-American relations." It doesn't take a statement by any high German-American to demonstrate that the Olympic games are being pressed into a similar political service. The United States should follow France's example in refusing to send an officially representative group of athletes to the Nazi Olympics.

Class of '36

COMMENCEMENT WEEK on the American campus is an ancient tradition and undoubtedly helps to restore faltering endowment funds. Its full significance, however, was never cited by the hordes of speakers who descended on the defenseless graduates. Almost without exception, the class of 1936 has been treated to a series of addresses written by Republican party stooges and advanced mystics. Some, like the president of Colgate University, declared that our "liberty" is endangered by the sporadic gestures at social reform of the Roosevelt administration; others, like Nicholas Murray Butler, pleaded for a "restoration of morals" to end this "nonsensical chatter about class struggle."

It becomes increasingly clear that students will achieve education and security outside of the traditional curriculum. Their trust in the nine hundred old men steadily diminishes, and at least one evidence of this will be furnished on July 3, 4 and 5 in Cleveland when two thousand delegates assemble for the Third American Youth Congress. There American undergraduates will mingle with young people from every section of American life and, together, chart next steps in the genuine quest for those goals so emptily recited during Commencement: peace, freedom, progress.

Cable from France

WITH the pontifical *Temps* in its van, the entire French reactionary press has been outraged by the behavior of the People's Front government and its premier. Here is a man, a Socialist all his life, who insists on commemorating the Commune, singing the "International" and crooking his fisted arm. Just as if he were not the Premier of France! And this, after every respectable organ has been hailing him throughout the month of May as a statesman of moderation who demonstrated the old adage that a Socialist who becomes a minister is not a Socialist minister. Simply scandalous, this People's Front government. Has anyone ever seen its like for taking campaign promises seriously? Why, it has been treating the entire platform as some kind of solemn contract.

During scarcely a fortnight in office, it has been fulfilling one pledge after another with a haste bordering on indecency. Here they have abolished decree laws, rehabilitated civil servants' salaries and veterans' allowances, prolonged the school age, enacted the forty-hour week, established collective bargaining and paid vacations, passed laws for farm relief. Even the Senate, in which capitalism placed full trust, has barely dared to resist these measures and is behaving precisely as the Left predicted. Now this unheard-of government is attacking the Bank of France strictly in line with the People's Front program and contemplates actual nationalization of war industries. It has been eliminating the foes of the Republic with a terrifying speed. To climax its campaign it has applied the January dissolution law to the various fascist leagues which had prudently existed under the camouflage of political parties. This unexpected blow fell so suddenly that it has knocked La Rocque, Taitinger, Renaud and Bucart groggy.

ON June 21 the Croix de Feu attempted street demonstrations. The police, who had always hated the Colonel's gangs, went for them with a will and parades were dispersed easily and without disturbance. Even La Rocque's order for his followers to display tricolor flags proved to be a complete fiasco. Yesterday's Congress of the Gendarmerie wired Blum as follows: "We hail with joy the dawn of a new era and vow fullest devotion to democratic principles. We express confidence in the Premier's purge from the gendarmerie of elements hostile to republican institutions." Another sign of the times came last week when a reactionary weekly interviewed a leading military person on what the army would do in case of disturbances. The answer was that "France has a Constitution and

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ministers. The army is under the orders of its chief, the Minister of War. Its duty is plain."

Canton Aflame

THE Nanking government's reply to Canton's demand that it fight Japan has been pure evasion. Nanking is trying to narrow down the issue to the question of civil war, and in this way cover up its consistently treacherous and weak-kneed policy toward Japan. It is true that there have been basic differences of long standing between Nanking and Canton, and Canton is doubtless pleased with the present chance of embarrassing Nanking. But in pressing its anti-Japanese demand upon Nanking, Canton is voicing the determined conviction of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people today. The great popular response to its program has confirmed Canton's action as a powerful stimulus to the growth of the anti-Japanese movement.

Of first importance has been the huge demonstration of 100,000 Cantonese on June 12. Men, women and children marched all day through the city beneath a heavy rain, while planes droned overhead. According to a United Press dispatch from Canton, there were "farmers carrying their hoes; youthful students, workers in restaurants and cafes, drugstore men, coal miners, motion-picture theater employes, engineers—men who represented China's millions." The mass meeting passed three resolutions, emphatically confirming the Canton government. These resolutions called:

> (1) For a telegraphic demand to Nanking that it immediately resist Japanese aggression;
>
> (2) For a nationwide order to the military authorities to mobilize forces to block the Japanese invaders;
>
> (3) For requests to Chinese abroad, in America and elsewhere, to urge Nanking to fight Japan immediately.

Such resolutions deserve the support of everyone concerned with the defeat of Japanese aggression and with a peaceful solution of the Far Eastern question. Only a determined policy of resistance can stop Japan. A weak policy, such as Nanking's, merely encourages the aggressor and aggravates the war danger in the Far East. However, if it is to strengthen the anti-Japanese front, the Canton government must grant civil liberties to the people, permit all political parties to carry on patriotic activities within its territory; it must arm the people for the anti-Japanese struggle; it must confiscate the property of Japanese imperialists and Chinese traitors and must call at once for the organization of a national defense government and a united anti-Japanese army.

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Britain Aids War

THE Baldwin government continues to act as the chief abettor of the warlike powers. In response to Mussolini's threats it announces that it will abandon sanctions against Italy. Despite Mr. Eden's claims that his government is lifting sanctions out of a desire for peace, there is no reason to believe that danger of war will diminish because of this move. Since Mussolini shows no intention of relinquishing his program of conquest in the Mediterranean area, Anglo-Italian friction threatens to continue. Britain's stand is all too reminiscent of the position taken by Sir John Simon in 1932 in preventing collective action by the League powers against Japan's onslaught upon China. The fruits of that policy appear in Japan's belligerent role in the Far East today. Yet, we are still asked to believe that aggressive powers can be restrained if their aggression is condoned and encouraged.

And when the effect of the British move in emboldening Germany and Japan is considered, the fallacy of the argument for abandoning sanctions as a peace measure becomes strikingly evident.

The Baldwin government is itself primarily responsible for the fact that real collective action by the League powers against Mussolini's aggression did not materialize. And now Baldwin would have it appear that the fault lies with the *principle* of collective action for peace and the Covenant of the League of Nations in which this principle inheres.

BUT the validity of collective security as a peace instrument is abundantly clear, as John Strachey demonstrates in his article appearing in this issue. The balance of forces in the world today is not on the side of the instigators of war but on the side of the nations which want peace. A determined and timely collective stand by Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union, supported by the smaller nations of Europe and by the United States, could have frustrated Mussolini's plans for subjecting Ethiopia.

Today the imperialist plans of the chief aggressors, Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and imperialist Japan, may still be blocked provided the mass of peace-loving people in all countries compel their governments to follow the path of collective security.

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Who Backs the Black Legion?

JOHN L. SPIVAK opened his Black Legion series in THE NEW MASSES with this blunt statement: *The industrial and political ramifications of the terroristic Black Legion are too widespread for Michigan's officials to risk a thorough investigation. Their plan now is to kill the story as quickly as possible before it gets out of hand and involves too many important people.*

That was three weeks ago. Since then events have justified Spivak's prediction. Three Black Legion "probes" are under way in Detroit, Pontiac and Jackson. But the authorities are sabotaging these "probes."

Only the surface of this fascist mess has been scratched. A few muddled tools caught in a private murder have been arrested and questioned. The real powers behind the Black Legion have not been disclosed. Yet nothing could be more obvious than that the Black Legion is a political organization with fascist aims. The oath binding members to obey their leaders without question is directed against Catholics, Jews, Negroes and Communists. The homes of workers who joined trade unions have been bombed. This reveals the definite aim of crushing labor organizations. And now, Dayton Dean, the Legion's ace killer, has confessed he was ordered to kill Maurice Sugar, Detroit Farmer-Labor leader.

Who is behind the Legion? What are its relations with the Republican Party? With the Liberty League?

If these questions are left to the Michigan politicians, controlled by Ford's secret service chief, they will never be answered. A federal investigation alone can divulge the sinister truth. The American people are entitled to know the full truth about the Black Legion. They are entitled to a complete exposure of the financial and political groups who have initiated Nazi methods in American life.

The bill introduced into Congress by Senator Benson and Representative Dickstein calls for a federal investigation of the Black Legion. All progressive and trade union groups should demand the immediate passage of that bill. A federal investigation of the Black Legion is necessary *at once* before the records are destroyed and the criminals are beyond exposure. No legalistic pretenses should be permitted to stand in the way of a federal investigation. Washington has every legal right to intervene in this case—and the imperative duty to do so.

Evidence has already been produced that the Black Legion is an interstate organization engaged in terror.

There is evidence that the Black Legion has members in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Michigan.

Letters and instructions have been exchanged between Art Lupp, State Commander of the Black Legion in Michigan, and V. H. Effinger, Western District Commander. Lupp wrote from Michigan, Effinger from Ohio. There was thus interstate communication.

Michigan members of the Black Legion paid dues to Effinger, who lives in Lima, Ohio. There has been no examination of the income tax of State Commander Lupp or Western District Commander Effinger. This too is a purely federal matter.

The Black Legion has been guilty of murder, arson, flogging and kidnaping. It is organized, armed reactionary terror against trade unionists, the Farmer-Labor movement, Catholics, Jews, Communists and Negroes. Its existence is a serious threat to the lives and liberties of Americans. The federal authorities must act now to smash it.

Homage to Maxim Gorky

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

HE was a son of the people; he grew up in the lower depths, among those who suffer; he tasted heavy labor and hunger from his earliest youth; he wandered across the broad lands of his country. A weaker man would have succumbed; a man of lesser spirit would not have asked questions. But the young Gorky possessed enormous energies, and his spirit burned bright. He was not broken; he became a revolutionary.

The immense force known to us as Maxim Gorky consisted of several basic elements. Without his penetration into the very heart of Russian life there would have been no Gorky; without his laborer's protest there would have been no Gorky; without his ideal of a socialist society there would have been no Gorky. Great talents in Russian literature—Bunin, Kuprin, Merezhkovski—went to pieces because they attached themselves to the class condemned to perish; Gorky grew to gigantic stature because he was part of the class destined to transform the world.

From the first day Gorky appeared in Russian literature, in 1892, it was evident that a new class was speaking. Unlike Chekhov's melancholy heroes, Gorky's first types were hungry and joyous; they had sharp teeth and insatiable appetites. The tramps he introduced into literature were full of power, arrogance, challenge. His "creatures that once were men," posed against the modern capitalist with his cynically-planned profits, were the handwriting on the wall.

Then Gorky abandoned his tramps as he had abandoned the youth with the flaming heart. These had all been literary experiments with a romantic flavor, despite their burdens of social and economic truth. Now Gorky began to describe the social-political upheavals which were shaking the country. *On Deck, Children of the Sun, Foma Gordeyev*—one after another came these new, powerful novels which stirred the intelligentsia, penetrated the masses, let no one rest, roused a thousand questions. And out of the 1905 Revolution came other startling works: *Confessions, Notes of a Superfluous Man,* finally *Mother,* that colossal novel which left so deep an impression upon the whole of Russian literature and upon the literature of the world. By this time no one could doubt where Gorky was heading. The questions had been answered; the path was clearly marked out. Gorky was a revolutionary, a socialist. The old working woman who enters the Bolshevik Party after her only son is arrested in a demonstration was Gorky's ideal type . . . perhaps idealized. But this idealization, based on the realities of life, Gorky said: this is how a working woman should act; here is an ideal for men to follow.

Maxim Gorky had much more to tell, much which he considered important though

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not directly connected with the revolutionary struggle. Gorky, the man who studied and grew from day to day, the man who drank avidly from the streams of world-culture, was now ready to describe the true appearance of the Russian land. A bad earth, a corrupted one; illiterate, crude people; men who got drunk, beat their wives, insulted their children, perished of boredom. Foul people, but somewhere deep in them stirred a great longing for a beautiful world, a tremendous energy, an enormous love of life. So far these living forces had expressed themselves in wild outbreaks, in humiliating innocent people, in an ugly existence. What a horrible soil! It would have to be plowed and irrigated and warmed with sunlight before it could bear healthy fruit.

Gorky set out to explore this ancient soil. He described it with the truth of one who grieves in anguish over what he sees. *Childhood, The Village Okurov, The Life of Batvei Kozshmiakin*—these books do not appear revolutionary. But Gorky explained them:

> Why do I recount these ugly things? So that you, gentlemen, should know about them; for they are not the past, they are far from being yesterdays. You like songs about imaginary things. You like horrors charmingly told. The fantastically-frightful disturbs you pleasantly. But I know the horrible which is real, the frightful which is commonplace. It is my incontestable right to disturb you unpleasantly by stories about these things so that you may know how men live. We live a low and dirty life—that is the fact.

Later, in the twenties of the present century, Gorky wrote *My Universities,* another panorama of the old Russia. The very title of this book holds the bitter sarcasm of one whose universities consisted of serving as a messenger boy, of being beaten by his boss, of sleeping hungry on a wet floor.

A GALLERY of men and women; but not a collection. Let the parasitical capitalists and their subservient artists make collections "out of curiosity." Gorky wrote out of the depths of his heart so that men might know that the very foundation of life was repulsive, that it had to be rebuilt. That transformation could be accomplished only by the proletariat which struggled for the socialist revolution under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

Gorky's relations with this party began quite early, in the first years of the twentieth century. Between 1908 and 1913 he carried on a lively correspondence with Lenin who said, "Gorky is without doubt the most significant representative of proletarian art." His art was proletarian not because he wrote exclusively about workers and revolutionaries; his art was proletarian because everything he wrote sought to aid the proletarian revolution.

When the October Revolution came, Gorky at first had doubts; he criticized the Bolsheviks; he did not believe it was possible to transform the peasants into builders of socialism. Soon he saw the truth and made common cause with the Bolsheviks. Lenin was patient with Gorky even when the latter was wrong. Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to make it possible for Gorky to devote himself entirely to his creative work, since this would be the essence of Gorky's contribution.

MAXIM GORKY

During the eighteen years which followed October, Gorky turned out monumental works, among them *The Artomanovs, The Life of Klim Samgin, Dostigaev.* At the same time he wrote a vast amount of journalism. Gorky was always a publicist, yet he wove even this form of writing with the threads of art.

His journalism was energetic, direct, colorful, full of powerful rhythm. After the revolution, he became one of the most important pamphleteers in the struggle for the Soviet Union, for the social revolution in other countries and for bolshevism. He reacted rapidly to everything which happened at home and abroad. He saw that the capitalist world was declining and called upon the intellectuals of the world to break with the old order:

> The capitalist world dies, rots. It has no energy left for a revival. Its powers are exhausted. This world keeps itself together only mechanically, by inertia, by relying upon the brutal might of the police, the army—and this is no very certain support, since the majority of the soldiers are proletarians whose minds may be clogged with philistine prejudices but whose political consciousness, whose revolutionary class-consciousness must develop under these conditions. The world-wide social revolution is no fantasy; it is an inevitable event which has become timely.

Against the dying, rotting world Gorky's articles and pamphlets pictured the Soviet Union, the land of growing socialism. Gorky told the Soviet workers about their own labors and why these labors were great and historic. He initiated vast collective works on the history of various factories, on the history of the civil war—literary enterprises designed to show the Soviet workers how they won their freedom. At the same time Gorky spoke to the masses of all the capitalist countries, and to the intellectuals whom he was anxious to win over to the side of the social revolution.

WHAT a rich and fruitful life, a life of indefatigable labor in spite of the illness which for forty years devoured his lank body! Through it all Gorky was friend, leader, and guide to young writers. He was not only a proletarian writer, one of the first, in fact, but he may justly be called the father of proletarian literature in Russia. It was he who several years prior to the October Revolution edited the first anthology of Russian proletarian literature; and his last years were devoted to training large groups of new Soviet writers.

A great life has closed; a great work has remained. That work will live to inspire countless people to struggle for that new world to which Maxim Gorky gave his life.

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Collective Security for Peace

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON.

IN Britain the working-class and peace movements are today seriously hampered by confusion on the subject of collective security. It seems possible that the same difficulty has arisen, or may arise, in America. Yet the international situation is incomprehensible without a knowledge of the role which this principle has played, and is playing, in world affairs.

The idea of Collective Security is a simple one: a number of states agree to go to each other's assistance if any one of them is attacked. There is really no more and no less to it than that. And it makes very little difference whether this idea is embodied in mutual assistance pacts, treaties, or in the Covenant of the League of Nations.

No one, however, who reads the Covenant of the League of Nations can possibly doubt that this was the central conception around which the League was built up. The British Government, in particular, was insistent on this principle finding clear expression. And so it did—above all in Articles 10 and 16 of the League's Covenant. For a number of years after the foundation of the League the British Government was a champion of Collective Security. But in the autumn of 1924, when the newly installed Baldwin Cabinet rejected (it is said by one vote) the re-affirmation of this principle contained in the Geneva Protocol, the attitude of the British Government to the principle of Collective Security began to change. In 1931 this change became unmistakable. At the first international crisis which occurred after the election of the National Government, the crisis provoked by the Japanese attack on China, the British Government showed that it had, in fact though not in form, abandoned the principle of Collective Security. It took a leading part in preventing the states which were members of the League of Nations from doing anything to stop the aggressive state, Japan, or from assisting the attacked member state, China.

Shortly afterwards the explicit abandonment occurred. British ministers in a number of remarkable declarations repudiated the principle of Collective Security. Lord Londonderry (then a cabinet minister), for example, declared at Southampton on July 27, 1935, that the League of Nations was a mere organization for debates and discussions between different Foreign Ministers and contained no principle of mutual aid against attack. He thus made what the diplomats call a unilateral repudiation of Article 16 of the Covenant. Many statements of policy made by the British Government between 1931 and 1935 expressed the same view (*vide*, for example, Lord Stanhope, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the House of Lords, December 5, 1934. Sir John Simon in the House of Commons, May 18, 1934: Paragraphs I and II, subsections A to D of the White Paper of March 11, 1935). But the most important declaration was made by Mr. Baldwin at Glasgow on November 23, 1934. Mr. Baldwin said roundly that "a collective peace system, in my view, is perfectly impracticable . . . it is hardly worth considering."

During the late summer of 1935, however, British ministers reversed these declarations and once more declared their unhesitating acceptance of the principle of Collective Security as embodied in the Covenant of the League. The most notable declaration was contained in Sir Samuel Hoare's speech at Geneva at the meeting of the Assembly in September, 1935. Moreover, Britain urged and secured a partial application of the principle of Collective Security, when Italy attacked another member state, Abyssinia. But the British Government did not secure and did not propose, that the League states should do enough, effectively to restrain the aggressor. Finally, in March, 1936, when Germany violated the Treaty of Locarno and, under its terms, committed an act of aggression against France, the British Government successfully exerted itself to prevent the application of the principle of Collective Security.

Taking the story as a whole, there can be little doubt that the British Government has reversed its attitude towards Collective Security, and that it is now an opponent of this principle.

The British Government is not the only organization which has changed its views of Collective Security. On the contrary, both the Soviet Union and the Communist International have also changed their attitudes, but in the reverse direction. During the early years of the existence of the League of Nations, these two bodies condemned the principle of Collective Security. From about 1930 onwards, however, their attitude changed. The Soviet Government joined the League of Nations in 1933. The Communist International, through all its sections, is now conducting a world-wide campaign to bring governments of capitalist countries to apply the principle of Collective Security as a vital means to preserving peace.

Have the British Government on the one hand, and the Soviet Government and the Communist International on the other, been inconsistent? They have not. On the contrary, both have remained consistent champions of the causes and interests which they respectively represent. These causes or interests have been: for the British Government the continuance of the power of the British governing class: for the Soviet Government, the continuance of the power of the Russian working class; for the Communist International, the capture of power by the working class of the world. In other words, the maintenance of the principle of Collective Security was, for a little less than a decade after the Peace of Versailles, an interest of the British governing class and a menace to both the Russian and every other working class. About 1930, however, this situation began to change, and from the accession to power of the Nazi regime in Germany in 1933, the position became reversed. The maintenance of Collective Security became a working-class interest and its destruction an interest of the British governing class. Accordingly, all three of the experienced and far-sighted organizations concerned adapted their policy to a changed reality.

HOW and why has this strange reversal occurred? Collective Security has been repudiated by the British Government because its application would have made impossible the succor and support which Britain has given to Nazi Germany. After a long period of doubt (and even denial) the events of the last six months have convinced me that support for Nazi Germany is the basic principle of the foreign policy of the present British Government. The British Government has given and is giving this support to the Nazi regime for the following reasons: Without this support Germany could not have achieved her repeated successes in foreign policy (such as the repudiation of, first, the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty, when she introduced conscription; and, second, the destruction of the Locarno Treaty, when she reoccupied the Rhineland). And without these successes the Nazi regime could not have maintained itself. But the fall of that regime was an event which the British Government was at all costs determined to prevent. Hence, despite the enormous risks to British imperialism involved in the re-creation of a militarily dominant Germany, the British Government has consistently refused to allow the other states of Europe to prevent (as, in the beginning, they so easily could have done) the re-creation of a Germany capable of aggression.

Why, on the other hand, has the maintenance of the principle of Collective Security become an interest of the working class of both the Soviet Union and the rest of the world? In the first place, it is evident to every serious observer that peace in the given world situation depends upon the application of the principle of Collective Security. And peace, of course, is always an interest of the

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working class. Today, however, the fight for peace is peculiarly bound up with the fight against capitalism.

Most people are familiar with the fact that the world today is divided into relatively satisfied, and ravenously dissatisfied, imperialist powers. France and Britain lead the first camp, Germany, Italy and Japan the second. To this division of the capitalist world there is now added a formidable non-capitalist state, the Soviet Union, which, in the interests of building socialism, has allied itself with one of the satisfied capitalist empires, namely, France.

What, in this situation, is the interest of the working class of the world? Their essential interest, as always, is to get rid of the capitalist system in further areas of the world, and to set up their own socialist regimes in these areas. How, again in the existing world situation, can this be done? First of all, the leaders of the working class must decide which parts of the world offer the best immediate opportunity for the abolition of capitalism and the capture of power by the working class. Where, in other words, is capitalism weakest? The answer must unquestionably be, it is weakest in the dissatisfied, ravenous capitalist empires such as Germany and Italy. Indeed, capitalism is so weak in these countries that it can only be sustained, literally from month to month, by an unbroken series of diplomatic or military successes. German and Italian Fascist capitalisms have now reached the point when they must ceaselessly expand or die. Hence, the paramount interest of the working class of the world, fully as much as of the working class of the Soviet Union, is to block their path. For no sooner will that be done than the very means of existence of these capitalisms will be taken away from them.

NOW it is the extreme good fortune of the working class of the world that this paramount interest of theirs coincides with the temporary interests of some sections of the capitalist classes of the satisfied empires. For the ceaseless expansion of the Fascist states, though it is a necessary condition of existence for their capitalisms, menaces the existence of every other state.

These are the reasons why the application of the principle of Collective Security has become a paramount working-class interest. Today there is a perfect identity of interests between the cause of peace and the cause of the working class. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, since capitalist imperialism is today visibly and undeniably the cause of war. Moreover, some of the interests of some sections of the governing classes of the satisfied empires (e. g., England and France and their satellite states) are also bound up with the application of the principle of Collective Security. In the case of the Italian aggression in Africa, real and important interests of British imperialism were involved. These interests induced the predominant part of the British governing class to favor the application of the principle of Collective Security in this particular case, and up to a certain very limited degree. Again there is a minority group within the British governing class (today almost entirely excluded from the government) which desires the application of Collective Security against German aggression. In France, larger elements within the governing class favor the application of Collective Security to Germany, but a smaller section favors its application to Italy.

The broad lesson of the events of the last year is, however, that the interests of the governing classes of the satisfied empires are too divided for them ever effectively to apply the principle of Collective Security to a determined aggressor. The governing classes of France and Britain are, to use a phrase of the psychologists, fatally ambivalent. They are irrevocably in two minds about restraining a fascist aggressor. On the one hand they would like to do it, because every such act of aggression either menaces their interests or threatens to do so. On the other, they cannot bear the prospect of destroying their brother capitalists of the aggressor states. For the capitalists of rival imperialist states are in very truth brothers under the skin—brothers like Cain and Abel.

This is why we can never depend upon our ruling class to stand by its obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations, and so preserve the peace of the world. Our rulers are now hopelessly divided. Moreover each individual leader, from Mr. Baldwin downwards, is divided within himself. So involved in the insoluble contradictions of their system have they become that they are willing to allow important imperial interests to be sacrificed rather than apply the hated principle of Collective Security. Peace then can only be preserved by the efforts of the peoples of the satisfied empires. These empires are still capitalist democracies. Moreover they contain vast numbers of men and women who not only desire peace, but have been effectively organized to support the cause of peace. These peace organizations extend far beyond the working-class movements. Together with these movements they are fully strong enough to force their governments to act upon their pledged word under the League Covenant and stand together against the aggressor. In Britain these peace forces could destroy any government which refused to do this. And in France they have so destroyed a reactionary government. There the power of the governing class has been seriously weakened. The balance of strength is now with those who put the maintenance of peace above the maintenance of capitalism.

The same thing can certainly be done in this country. But it has not been done and it is not being done. On the contrary the British Government is being allowed to destroy all possibility of a united front against the fascist aggressors. The cause of peace is consequently in acute jeopardy. Just over a year ago, when Germany introduced conscription and tore up the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty, she was very weak in relation to the forces commanded by the League States. At that time Italy was only preparing her Abyssinian adventure. Both aggressors could have been stopped without the risk of war. Today the Italian act of aggression has been almost completed. Fascist aggression has been greatly strengthened in Italy and enormously encouraged in Germany.

GERMANY has now reached the point at which Italy stood a year ago. She is openly preparing to move outside her own borders. No serious observer denies that, if nothing is done, by this time next year she will, in one form or another, have swallowed Southeastern Europe. German-fascist imperialism will be supreme from the Baltic to Constantia. Once that has happened, Germany's economic strength will begin to approximate to her military strength. But this catastrophic development can be stopped. It can be stopped by the determination of the British, French and Russian peoples. The Soviet Government, and, in this case, the French Government, are not in two minds about the necessity of stopping it. If the British Government were equally determined, Hitler could not move. For Germany cannot make war on these three governments *before* she has acquired the raw material and man power base of Southeastern Europe. Hence, if France, Britain and the Soviet were to declare publicly and with unmistakable sincerity that German aggression upon Austria or Czechoslovakia would be regarded by them as an act of war, peace could still be preserved, even at this eleventh hour. But when once German fascism has broken out of the borders of the Reich and has shown its power of conquest, then a new general war in which Britain will certainly be involved will be inevitable.

This, then, is the last chance. If the Nazi regime is held within its own borders by the power of France, Britain and the Soviet Union and their dependent smaller states, the future may be relatively peaceful. Capitalism may be overthrown from within the fascist dictatorships. It may be possible to pass out of the capitalist-imperialist phase of world history without a second world war.

This is the issue, and it will be decided in Britain. Let us make no mistake about it. The responsibility is on us. *De te fabula narratu.* The story is told about you—you, the people of Britain. History has decided that the people of Britain should have the decisive word in the matter. If they allow their government to continue to aid and abet the expansion of Nazi Germany, then general war is certain.

But if we, like the people of France, are clear-sighted enough, energetic enough and brave enough to take the matter into our own hands, and force whatever government speaks in our name to stand by the cause of peace, then a second world war will be avoided. We shall decide our fate within the year.

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Jim Farley's Festival

MARGUERITE YOUNG

PHILADELPHIA.

WHILE delegates merrily availed themselves of this Quaker City's welcome—a suspension of the rules against selling liquor on Sunday—one of the New Deal politicos sat in a Market Street hotel, telling a success story. It seems that long ago in an upstate New York port there lived a longshore gang boss. He earned his nickname, Fingey, by taking a ten-dollar dare to chop off the end of his own little finger. That performance made him the New York Central's natural choice to break the first strike that developed on their docks. He succeeded, and at once acquired a saloon where, alone, the men were allowed to turn in their pay checks for cash—that is, for what little was left after Fingey took his. Soon he sold the saloon and bought himself a newspaper. Thus Fingey became a publisher—and also chairman of the Democratic state central committee in New York.

The overwhelming majority of the Democratic convention delegates are of the Fingey breed, professional politicians or politicians transformed into officials, machine-made creatures of the classic alliance beween business and both old parties.

Yet forces pounding from the outside may make this week's convention historic. It was to be just another Roosevelt Rally, with Postmaster General James A. Farley calling the acts and collecting the receipts. It was to be the same New Deal performance, without benefit of even a change of verbiage. But events of recent weeks and days have changed all that. What will be the result, whether a novelty merely of language or something more, remains to be seen. One thing, however, seems clear: this is a year of shifting political alignments, and even some of the Democratic command realize that it presents a challenge requiring new trappings if not new substance.

These events are based on the New Deal itself. They began to take shape when the New Deal's first beneficiaries, the top trusts of finance and industry, emboldened by the renewed strength it gave them, began to turn upon it; and when, simultaneously, disillusioned citizens began executing their own economic and political measures—strikes plus independent mass movements on the political field. Thus the drift that now promises a crystallization of class forces, the last thing Franklin D. Roosevelt wants to see. He is caught now in the crossfire. How to meet it, especially how to meet its recent swift manifestations, is the Democratic dilemma that gives this pre-convention scene the element of suspense.

The Hearst-Liberty-League crowd's dramatic offensive apparently has given the Democratic platform advisers the push that was needed to make them respond to the pull of the Coughlin third-party demagogy. It was this combination that awakened the Democratic chieftains to the real state of affairs. Although they had ample opportunity to sense it earlier, they blandly shut their eyes to it.

Asking, "What's the score?" Jim Farley arrived here last Friday anticipating a typically Rooseveltian smiling-through convention and platform.

There were plenty of signs to be read. This very Philadelphia area has witnessed in the past few months a new wave of strikes—an outburst of small, stubborn ones, in retail food, metal, sugar refining, textiles, and finally a sit-down in the Camden plant of R.C.A., with its 12,000 workers, signaling a situation meriting the personal attention of the ace New Deal Trouble-Shooter, Assistant Secretary of Labor Edward F. McGrady.

More important, Philadelphia's city committee for the promotion of a Farmer-Labor Party, embracing over fifty union representatives including virtually all the biggest of the American Federation of Labor, enjoys the cooperation of many labor people who are ardently for Roosevelt for President, but as determinedly for independent political action locally.

But the demands of such forces for progressive measures, especially for a Supreme Court veto curb, worried the President and his advisers not at all, not even after Landon, dominated by tories resorting to distinctly new demagogy, framed his state minimum-wage amendment promise. To all questions concerning an amendment plank, Democratic stragetists here replied confidently as late as last Saturday, "Nothing doing." They evaded the question with a hint that Roosevelt, reelected, would appoint new judges to provide a liberal interpretation of the Constitution.

THEN came Father Coughlin's stroke—the "third-party" candidacy of Congressman William Lemke, backed by Townsend and heirs of Huey Long's Share-the-Wealth clubs, That silenced Farley and his aides here. Privately, of course, they recognized at once that the effect nationally of the "third" party, especially if it gets the financial assistance of the gentlemen backing Landon, might be to take away just that small percentage of Roosevelt votes in decisive states that would put the Republicans in. The arrival of John Raskob's Liberty League defy, signed by the Smith-Ely-Reed-Cohalan brigade, brought the final conviction which should have been obvious to Roosevelt long ago—that these oligarchs are lined up in almost solid phalanx behind the Republicans.

The question is, what now? The answer will have been given by Roosevelt by the time these words are printed. Possibly it may embrace a constitutional amendment [something still not sold to Roosevelt], plus planks promising labor and peace guarantees, and aid to farmers, consumers and cooperatives. The slenderness of this reed against the profascist tory ranks, however, is visible everywhere you turn in this convention.

HEARST himself is represented here, by Russell of Georgia and Kramer of California, the anti-sedition bill authors; and delegate Tydings of Maryland, co-author of the military disaffection bill. Assistant Secretary of War Harry H. Woodring, who sounded off for storm troops by proudly pronouncing the C. C. C. a potential producer of them, is a delegate from Kansas. Representing the District of Columbia is Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper, Big Business' Washington page-boy. The Long, Pendergast, Tammany and lesser machines are represented in full force. The Tammany contingent includes types like Generoso Pope, the sand-gravel-publishing promoter of Mussolini, and John P. O'Brien, former Mayor of New York, the man whose giant intellect embarrassed even Tammany. It is that kind of a convention—ready to plunk the rubber stamp on anything handed to it.

There are a few weak liberal voices: J. Stitt Wilson, former Socialist Mayor of Berkeley, California; and Congressman Byron Scott of the same state, seek a production-for-use plank. The Washington delegates stand committed to the same, but already explain the convention bound them only in their state.

From outside the delegates' ranks, there are other pressures—pleaders for women asking repudiation of discriminatory laws, pleaders for consumers seeking a plank declaring for consumer representation on all government agencies dealing with matters affecting them, and for a consistent policy of steadily increasing purchasing power. There is the possibility that, in addition to President Green and his American Federation of Labor Committee, with their Cleveland program for reaction, the convention may have to welcome John L. Lewis and other Committee for Industrial Organization figures, demanding at least legislation such as the Guffey coal control act.

It is these outside forces—right and left—that hold the key to the Democratic platform for 1936.

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The Arkansas Terror

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON

"GO where you want to. See what you want to. You're welcome. *But don't talk to niggers!*" With this warning we were released and our purses and camera films returned. We went out free to find out all that we could about sharecropping in Arkansas provided we spoke to no sharecroppers.

The strike of Negro and white sharecroppers in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union created a situation in which fear and violence and injustice were part of the air itself. The planters are determined that union organization shall not grow in Arkansas, and as a result wholesale arrests, beatings, evictions, forced labor and every kind of intimidation and threat are resorted to. "We're desperate!" one planter said,—and as a result of this desperation Dave Benson, Workers Alliance representative and union organizer, was arrested and fined $1,060 for interfering with labor, rioting, and driving a car without a state license. Interfering with labor is a term that can be used in Arkansas to make a criminal offense of almost anything but cotton chopping. Walking on a picket line becomes an act of violence. Urging demand for higher wages is inciting to riot. To ask for more than seventy-five cents for a ten-hour day is seditious. Even to ask that the seventy-five cents itself be paid is open rebellion. This is in effect the way that the law works out.

"Gentlemen," began the prosecuting attorney at the trial, "there may seem to be a bit of circumstantial evidence put forward in this case—BUT"—and here he shook his plump fists in the air—"this man is as guilty as hell! This bird comes from the heart of deep Russia and tells us how to run our plantations. He comes like a thief—like a thief in the night! Gentlemen, this is a great country of ours, stretching from sun to sun. I beg you to keep it so!" He paced up and down and shouted for almost ten minutes and then concluded: "I plead with you gentlemen to find this man guilty as hell and give him the full extent of the law! I thank you."

He sat down with his pink chin shaking from emotion. The jury, composed entirely of planters, except for one man, had sat very quiet and grave all during his amazing harangue. They had not even smiled when he paced up and down in front of them waving his arms like a cheer leader and bending almost double with the eloquence. They listened to him tell of a planter who had gotten a doctor for the sick child of a striking sharecropper, they heard him deny forced labor on the farms and roar that he would be the first to welcome an investigation. They listened to the refusal of three Negroes to identify Benson under oath (C'mere boy! Doyouswearto tellthewholetruthandnothingbutthetruthsohelpmeGod?) as the man who threatened them if they didn't come out on strike; and then they filed out and returned in seven minutes with a verdict of guilty and a recommendation that he be punished to the full extent of the law.

Following the trial, Clay East, a member of the S.T.F.U. defense committee, and M. Moody, the defense attorney, were surrounded by planters in the courthouse. East was struck over the head and jailed for safe keeping, and Moody threatened and warned to get out of the state. And at the same time we were introduced to several planters, told kindly that "You folks don't understand things down here," and advised that "everything in the world" was being done for the sharecroppers, and that all the trouble was caused by outside agitation.

"My man here will tell you folks all about everything," a planter said. He introduced us to a Negro who had come with him to the trial. "He'll just sit down here—if you folks don't *mind*—and tell you all about it." We sat down with the Negro, and talked and were arrested an hour later on suspicion. The fact that we came from out of state and that we had talked to Negroes, was sufficient reason for suspecting us in the tense atmosphere of a trial day in Forrest City and we were hustled abruptly into the office for questioning under arrest.

NO one who has not personally experienced the fiercely arrogant and brutal attitude of official law, the hidden threat and the open bullying, can understand the feeling in this Arkansas courtroom that day. The attempt at intimidation was obvious. And even to us who had no reason to be afraid, there came the sudden realization of the utter helplessness of all those arrested in these months of terror. Here was something that could not be reasoned with or appealed to. A momentary mood or alarm and the situation would be settled.

"Whatd'ye got in here? Where'd you come from?—What's this?—and this?—and this? . . ." They rummaged through our purses, suspected the camera of containing unspeakably criminal evidence, said "Uh-huh! Uh-huh!" in triumphant snorts when they discovered our ancestors hadn't been born in Arkansas, said press cards meant nothing to them, and were obviously disappointed when a reporter verified our identity. One planter urged our release and cordially invited us to inspect his uncle's plantation if we wanted to see a "really beautiful place" ("only don't talk to the niggers about the union or they'll run you off") and then we were released, much to the disappointment of a large crowd that had gathered outside the door in the hope of more and greater excitement.

This incident is trivial except for its implications and the insight it gives into the planters' minds. . . . "What nationality are you? Down here organizing? . . . Don't talk to niggers. . . . If you want to know the truth come to us. . . . You people don't understand. . . ." And these things, whether spoken with brutality or courtesy, are significant of the whole attitude of the region. We went away from the courthouse to try and see things as they were, and attempt to follow the advice of a Negro who had come into Memphis after traveling all night through the plantations. "If you want to know the truth," he said, "go wheh it's at!" And he did not mean in the planter's mouth.

Forced labor was denied, but there are affidavits signed before notaries, bearing witness that sharecroppers and day laborers had been threatened with violence, eviction and death, unless they returned to work. On one plantation, the overseer felt his gun and said he had "what it took to put out a strike," and another threatened to "build a bridge across the river with your bodies if you don't give up the union and stop disturbing." Rumors, letters, stories of eyewitnesses, the casual words of planters themselves, were testimony of the terror that was part of each day. No whites were allowed on some of the plantation roads. Even peddlers and fishermen were driven off the farms. "Hit the hahd road, boy! Hit the hahd road quick! . . . Don't let nobody see me talkin' to you here. Who's that man you was talkin' to? he'll say. What was you talkin' about?" . . . And in some places Negroes were not allowed to visit from plantation to plantation. If they saw each other it was only after dark, nor was it safe to walk on the roads for fear of being searched on one of the fifty possible "vagrancy" charges.

Cabins were searched and the union books confiscated, and those whose names were found in them were "attended to" in a number of ways. One planter took all of his croppers for a little drive into town, where they signed papers under compulsion, testifying to their happiness on the plantation and denying any interest in union organization. "Here come them papers sayin' this, and then along come union papers sayin' somethin' else. Back and forth. Back and forth. What's that man up in Washington gonna believe?" . . . Rumor is so prevalent and the facts so distorted according to the point of view of the speaker that the truth is difficult to trace. On both sides reports are inspired by fear, hatred, the desire to please, justify, or intimidate. It is impossible to be eyewitness to everything or to trace every rumor to its

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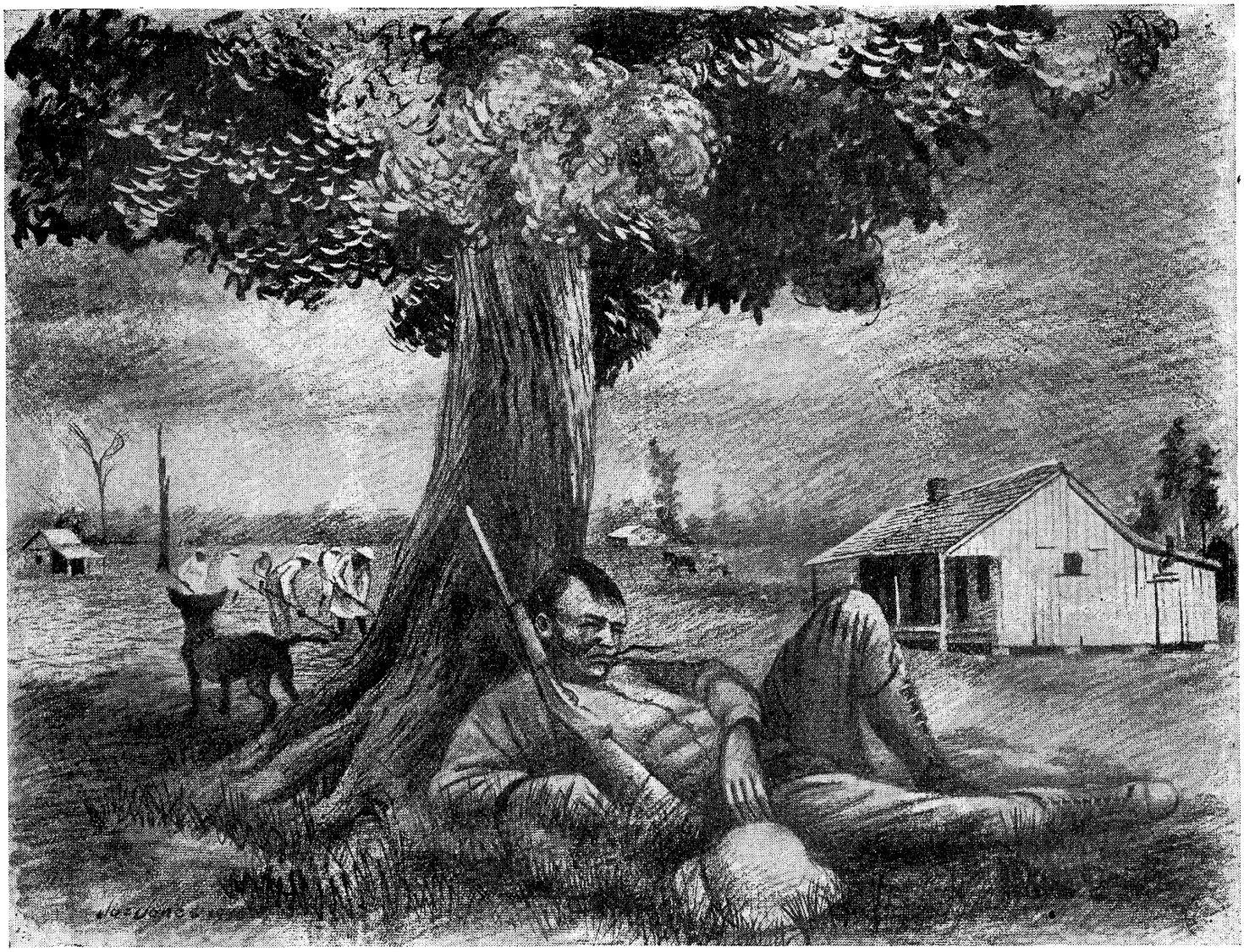

FORCED LABOR (In the Cotton Fields) *Joe Jones*

source in fact. The report of violence is accepted by either side as fact—provided it is laid to the opposition—and acted upon as such. As a result the meeting between planters and the S.T.F.U. committee was called off when the excitement and disturbance followed Dave Benson's trial, and an actual reign of terror began in counties affected by the strike, and spread over across the border into Memphis.

THERE is one truth, however, that cannot be hidden nor in any way whitewashed. It is the simple fact of the sharecroppers' living conditions. No juggling of figures or flat denial can conceal the thousands of shacks that are visible for miles along the highway. They cannot be dismissed as a mirage or a "nigger tale." Two-room or one-room houses like wooden crates perched up on stilts. No screen. Weeds and earth seen through wide cracks in the floor. The walls stuffed with cotton to keep wind out in winter. The children "nekkid as my thumb." Small garden plots with a few rows of corn and cabbage or else a barren space of dust between the shack and the cotton. No windows on the same side as the door. No trees. Sometimes a few "October plants" or a stalk of hollyhock. No shade. On one of the biggest plantations in the South—some fifty thousand acres—the houses were cleaner, more solid to the wind and some had been painted and did not sag as though hurled there by a cyclone, but the owner also ran a mill and owned a town so perhaps he could afford to make certain improvements from time to time. "I don't know what they're striking about," a planter said. "We give them everything in the world. Everything in the world! And then some outside agitator comes along and tells them to strike and they strike."

"Everything in the world" is usually three to four months of school (never compulsory), medical attention, seed, a mule, one pair of overalls, one pair of shoes and food. The food consists of molasses, flour, fatback, lard-mix and beans, and is charged back to the cropper in the fall with a *ten cents on the dollar interest*. Between the sharecropper and the final cash settlement of the crop (marketed by the planter) stands the cost of his "furnishings" at the commissary store. Here every two weeks he is given his rations, and duly charged with from *fifty to a hundred percent over the retail price*. Cornmeal in town at fifty cents becomes a dollar at the commissary, and lard-mix increases from fifty-eight to seventy-five cents in value on its trip to the plantation. Fatback is sold at the same price as round steak in town. The cropper comes usually only twice a month to the store, and curiously enough, even at the enormous profit on food he is told to go light on his order. "If you put it inside you, he can't take it away," was the explanation. "You might git strong and stout. But other way he charge you for what you buy and what you don't buy, and you ain't even got the food in you!" At the end of the year he is paid in cash for one-half the cotton crop, and if the planter tells him his furnishings have already used up the amount, he must accept this verdict. "He tell me to *forgit* my crop this year," a Negro told me. "What did you do?" I asked him. He looked at me and laughed. "I *forgit* it."

If the planter gives his tenant "everything in the world" he is pursuing a wise policy indeed, because in most cases he gets it all

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Joe Jones
SHARECROPPER MEMBER—S.T.F.U.
St. Francis County

Joe Jones
MITCHELL, Secretary,
Southern Tenant Farmers Union

back in the end, and with the assistance of the commissary store, his bread upon the waters returns to him as cake, with a few extra raisins thrown in!

The entire system leaves the sharecropper completely at the mercy of the individual planter. If the owner is honest there is the possibility that the tenant might get ahead in time, or at least survive in subsistence comfort. Unfortunately the planter's psychology is such that to him honesty involves more than what appears to be the simple truth. He justifies himself in various ways and in most cases is wholly sincere in his belief that his action is for the best. The orthodox conception of a plantation owner as some sort of a crude monster is absurd. He is a man more difficult and dangerous than this. Because he believes that he is right, and he believes that he is just. The planters consider themselves in a desperate condition, in danger both for their lives and their property, and as such, justified in a violent counter action against any symptoms of revolt. And the power is all on their side.

In contrast to the feeling of terror and suspicion and lawlessness that was everywhere in the strike area of Arkansas, it was a reviving experience to talk with the sharecroppers living now on the Sherwood Eddy plantation in Mississippi. The land is run on a cooperative basis, and has its governing council elected from the croppers themselves, thirty families, most of whom were union members evicted in March from an Arkansas plantation. The commune will share the profits from all crops, and from the operation of a saw mill, and when half of the original capital raised to buy the plantation is accumulated, the land will be turned over to the sharecroppers as their own. It is planned to introduce handicrafts to supplement the other work, and the group will make use of the Rust cotton-picking machine and prove that labor-saving inventions are not a menace to the South—when used on a cooperative basis.

It is too soon to predict the results of this experiment, but it is not too soon to witness the actual good accomplished, the atmosphere of comradeship, the better housing (even small temporary buildings) the quality of the food, the beginning of social education and the hope for the future. It is planned to make this enterprise not merely a small isolated and self-supporting group, but a center from which to spread cooperative education. Its leaders are not under any illusions about the problem they face, but here at least is the definite beginning of communal life, both in spirit and in practice, and in it there may be the roots of a greater thing.

Summation of the situation in Arkansas during the strike can only be expressed as a fierce reign of terror. The prison farms are run by private planters who contract for their labor at a discount. As a result every arrest is to the planters' advantage. Beatings, forced labor, injustice, evictions, broken meetings, wholesale arrests without cause, intimidation of every possible kind, can never be denied. And yet, under all of this fierce attack, there persists among the union members a stubborn and courageous loyalty. It is a loyalty based on desperation and hope, and also on understanding; and it is these three things which will direct the ultimate fate of the union and the future of the Arkansas sharecroppers.

We are happy to publish Josephine Johnson's brilliant and moving description of the Arkansas terror. If the "report of violence is accepted by either side as a fact," it is because experience teaches the workers that violence is an actual and persistent instrument used by the employers. The whole history of the American labor movment emphasizes the fact that violence is always initiated by the exploiters, never by the workers. Miss Johnson speaks truly when she bases the loyalty of the sharecroppers to their union on desperation, hope and understanding. *However beneficial an experiment like Eddy's may be in its way, the general solution lies in the "three things which will direct the ultimate fate of the union and the future of the Arkansas sharecroppers."*—THE EDITORS.

The Harvesters, California

MARIE DE L. WELCH

The Nomads had been the followers of herds and flocks,
Or the wilder men, the hunters, the raiders,
The harvesters had been the men of homes.

But ours is a land of nomad harvesters.
They till no ground, take no rest, are homed nowhere;
Travel with the warmth, rest in the warmth never;
Pick lettuce in the green season in the flats by the sea;
Rest nowhere, share in no harvest;
Pick cherries in the amber valleys in tenderest summer;
Camp in the ditches at the edge of beauty;
Pick grapes in the red vineyards in the low blue hills.

They are a great band, they move in thousands,
Move and pause and move on.
They turn to the ripening, follow the peaks of seasons,
Gather the fruit and leave it and move on.
Men of no root, no ground, no house, no rest,
Move and pause and move on.

Ours is a land of nomad harvesters,
They follow the ripening, gather the ripeness,
Rest never, ripen never,
Move and pause and move on.

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Doctors and War

JOAN SHIELDS

THE Bulletin of the Bronx County Medical Society for March points out that democratic armies are the best security against aggression and against autocratic, military usurpation. The title of this super-patriotic article is somewhat lengthy but worth giving in full: "The Medical Department of the Reserves: Opportunity to render an important and necessary service is offered to physicians who join the reserves."

The United States Army, with the help of various medical associations and in particular the American Medical Association, is, according to Surgeon-General Charles R. Reynolds and other army officers, "anxious to see an increase in their medical reserves. They urge physicians to enroll and to train regularly." And to those young doctors sitting in offices and trying to find the answer to the paradox of finding an increasing need for medical care and a diminishing private practice, the army hints that a first-class war might be a good thing. For, as Stephen Rippey writes in the conservative Medical Economics:

> When the next war comes—and there are well-informed persons who fear its arrival sooner than it is generally realized—Uncle Sam will expect some 20,000 men to drop their practices immediately and answer the call to the colors.

Such a war offers the doctor so much: regular pay; "the opportunity for research that wartime provides;" the chance to practice "preventive medicine" which General Reynolds remarks "is our great field;" the privilege of "first-hand study of battle wounds, typhus fever, trench fever, tetanus, gas bacilli and a wide assortment of wartime diseases and casualties."

But though army officers visit medical schools, speak to the students during school hours on the enchanting vistas opened up by army medicine and the necessity of getting in on the ground floor by volunteering for the Reserves, neither students nor young doctors seem eager to take advantage of the offer. If war comes, there is little chance that they will be kept out, for Mr. Rippey makes it clear that "the call in all likelihood will be compulsory. And physicians will have no choice about answering it." He hastens to add, not wishing to offend the profession, "This is no reflection on the medical profession, for those in the know expect few volunteers in the next war. . . . Virtually everything and everybody will be drafted. . . ."

Which raises the question of what the physician turned soldier can expect. The rank-and-file doctors—those who are not financially far above average and who have not made important names for themselves in their profession (that is, the young doctors)—face no life of ease while they draw pay for taking care of wounded in base hospitals far behind the lines. Their jobs are fully as dangerous as those of the infantry. "Theirs will be the responsibility of going into the field," as Mr. Rippey puts it, "following the fighting men into action, administering to their wounds on the battlefield and getting the injured to the rear with all possible speed." This is hardly a safe job. In the World War, the highest proportional mortality occurred among the medical staffs, among doctors and nurses.

Doctors in the middle stratum of civilian practice will man the emergency hospitals behind the firing lines. Even they are not so safe—they remain within range of artillery. And those who have been big shots have reserved places in the base hospitals. "Men who have topped the profession at home," so Mr. Rippey describes them, "will be assigned to these institutions." In Ethiopia, it is worth recalling, Mussolini's air squadrons bombed Red Cross hospitals.

Is this opportunity, spoken of so glowingly by the propagandists, really for "research?" True, money is spent on war-time medical research, upon banishing disease which ravages armies, upon keeping men well because by so doing "we are saving our government huge sums of money." Such research in no way complies with the real meaning of medical research[1] which is designed not to save life temporarily so that it may be used as cannon fodder but rather to build up the health of a nation so that people may go about their work and play with efficiency and benefit to themselves and the community. Medical research, if it is to have any real meaning, is designed to save life, not merely to postpone death until men and women can be killed mechanically on the battlefield. The amount of "salvaging" possible in wartime, the amount of "preventive medicine," is moreover limited by the condition of the patient. Men without arms or legs, with faces blown away, bodies corroded with gas and chemicals, nervous systems shattered by modern war, cannot be "salvaged" in any real sense. "Preventive medicine" can do nothing for them.

The article by Mr. Rippey, quoted above, is predicated on similar conditions of warfare being practised in a future war that prevailed in the World War. Infantry will bear the brunt of the battle. But even should mechanized warfare replace the ordinary soldier, the doctor's task would remain much the same, the danger fully as great.

Doctors are not volunteering for the reserves. The ranks are not filled. Doctors realize the danger of war, the necessity of preventing it by realistic struggle against it. War removes him from his practice with no guarantee, should he survive the war, that he would be able to resume his former practice. The army doctor is exposed to the full brunt of modern warfare at the front and incidentally is poorly paid. It is to the doctor's economic and social interest to fight against war, as much as it is to the interest of workers, white-collar employes, farmers, the vast majority of people to prevent war's outbreak. But to whom can the doctor turn within his profession? Not to the American Medical Association to which most practitioners belong. The A.M.A. officials are among the very group "topping the profession at home" who would be stationed in base hospitals. They are the "leaders" who oppose every progressive move within the medical profession, who fight socialized medicine and any real public-health insurance. Such "leaders," instead of being concerned with the necessity of the majority of their membership to resist the drive toward war, have been permitting, even encouraging, propaganda in favor of war, disseminated at state and county meetings of medical societies by army medical officers.

This does not mean that the rank-and-file doctors should abandon either the American Medical Association or the County Medical Societies. These organizations can be turned into powerful weapons against war. As yet, doctors do not realize their own strength. Isolated, they can do little. Politically alive, allied to other large and growing anti-war forces, they can gain tremendous strength. "Well-laid plans of both the Army and the Navy call for mustering physicians as one of the first steps of mobilization." (Nurses have already been notified, as Marguerite Young reported in the March 10 issue of THE NEW MASSES.) But doctors cannot be trained overnight. And Surgeon-General Reynolds adds, "Without doctors in large numbers, neither the Army nor the Navy can function."

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[1] Harvey Cushing, in his book *From a Surgeon's Journal: 1915-1918* recently published (Little, Brown and Company), portrays with extraordinary clarity the inadequacies and the impossibilities of any decent medical care or any fruitful scientific research under war conditions. It is true that one can use human bodies which have just been mutilated or which are reacting to the horrors of war, as laboratory animals; but facts gleaned from observation and study under war conditions cannot be adequately correlated on the battlefield or in base hospitals. It is, of course, a direct negation of the social utilization of science to look forward to any such "opportunities for research." One need not stress the irony that the same economic forces which degrade the physician socially and scientifically in peace times offer him a war "laboratory" as a means of economic and professional advancement.

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"Inciting to Riot"

SANDOR VOROS

KENT, OHIO.

THE plans had been laid carefully following the usual pattern: First, an injunction against mass picketing. Next two truckloads of "guards"—assorted thugs from Cleveland, Pittsburgh and points East. Then an assault on the picketline, a burst of gunfire, a barrage of teargas bombs, warrants against the wounded strikers and union officials for "inciting to riot," followed by a couple of days of simulated industrial activity inside the plant. Finally, the grand climax. The strikers, their morale broken, abandoning their union and slinking back to work. Blacklisting of the most militant and best union men, the rest eager to accept whatever terms the management of Black & Decker Electric Co., Kent, Ohio, manufacturers of fractional horsepower motors, chose to offer to them.

Then something miscarried. The injunction had been granted as per schedule at the end of May, some three weeks after the outbreak of the strike. It had been issued against Local 1203 of the International Machinists Association, which was leading the strike of the 400 men for a 10 percent increase in pay. Shortly after, a score or more strikers were arrested for violating the injunction against mass picketing and hauled into court.

The first indication that something might go wrong with the plan came at the trial when the judge, sensitive to the high community feeling, felt compelled to dismiss the arrested on the ground that it was impossible to establish that out of the hundreds gathered in front of the plant these were the men guilty of mass picketing.

Disregarding the hint, the company proceeded with the plan.

On June 18, six A.M., two huge moving-vans full of "guards" appeared out of nowhere in front of the gates. The heavy iron chains stretched across the entrance by the strikers were removed before the twenty-odd sleepy pickets in tents across the road clearly realized what had happened. When they ran over to investigate, operation No. 3 occurred. The "guards" inside the vans opened up with a burst of gunfire and a barrage of teargas bombs. Seven pickets were shot by point blank charges, the rest of them choked and blinded by gas fumes. The "guards" entered the factory triumphantly. Everything was perfect.

Company officials inside the plant congratulated themselves. The old and tested formula had once again proved a success. Now to stimulate a little activity and end the strike soon.

They rejoiced, but not for long. As they were soon to learn, Kent, just 12 miles outside of Akron, has not failed to absorb the lessons of the Goodyear Rubber and the Barberton Insulator strikes. The workers in Kent, too, had a plan. It hadn't been as carefully worked out and calculated as far in advance as that of the company.

There is good squirrel hunting around Kent and its citizens have lived with their constitutional right of keeping firearms. In less time that it takes to tell, the embankments around the factory have been occupied by men out hunting—but not for squirrels.

Reinforcements came on the double quick from nearby factories. There was no official declaration of general strike, but workers in the Twin Coaches Company, The Lamson Sessions Company, the Gougler Machine Company, the principal plants in this small Ohio town of 8,500 population all dropped their tools, grabbed clubs, blackjacks and whatever else was handy and rushed to the "front."

The aim of the men was good. Aided by high-power binoculars they let loose with a charge on anything that moved.

The "simulated activity," always an effective ruse to dampen the spirit of the strikers, came to a halt before it began. Slugs were whizzing by with deadly aim for taking chances on moving ground. A few direct hits were scattered. A charge smashed the hips of one of the "guards." The arm of another was shattered. A third was wounded in the abdomen. The "guards" threw themselves on the ground, hugging the cement floor, too frightened to raise even their heads. They had two machine guns, plenty of sawed-off shotguns, revolvers, gas bombs, but the workers entrenched in strategic vantage points along the embankments had the drop on them.

The "guards" were not given a chance to bring their machine guns into play. Besides, they were too frightened even to try.

A physician approached the gate, summoned by telephone from inside to attend to the wounded thugs. He was refused entry.

"They are wounded in there—" the physician pleaded.

"They asked for it, we didn't. Now they got what they asked for," he was told grimly.

"This is war!" another told him with finality. The wounded would be cared for later.

Company officials pleaded frantically through the telephone for help. They called for troops, for ambulances. "Send in a couple of machine guns in the ambulances," they suggested delicately.

Then the wires were cut and communication with the outside world was stopped.

With their quarry foe hidden from view, the marksmen looked for other targets. The 150 foot water tank was riddled with bullets and transformed into a spouting fountain. Windows were peppered. The moving vans left standing on the grounds were shot into sieves.

After long negotiations two ambulances were permitted to enter to take out the three most seriously wounded thugs. Before entry, they were searched from the springs up for hidden weapons by the swollen army of pickets, many of whom acted like military police, carrying clubs, blackjacks and some even sporting steel helmets.

The climax came later in the evening.

Under the pressure of an organized army of ten thousand union men and sympathizers from Akron, Barberton and the surrounding territory, that literally swamped this small town, the marshal and his force disarmed the "guards" and arrested them for "inciting to riot" on John Doe warrants sworn out by the strikers.

The triumphant yell: "Here come the rats" could be heard for miles as the "guards," escorted by a convoy of union men, were taken to the city jail.

Labor in the 14th Congressional District once again had given a demonstration of the new spirit, of the new growth of unity and solidarity that is beginning to permeate labor throughout the land. As in the case of the Barberton Insulator and Akron Goodyear strike it served notice once more on the employers and authorities that vigilante methods, terrorism and violence would not be tolerated but summarily dealt with. In Barberton, last November, they had forced "military sheriff" Jim Flower to evacuate and close down the Insulator plant and admit publicly that responsibility for "disorder, violence" would rest on the company if it persisted in operating its plant with scabs.

It took labor in Kent, however, to place legally the responsibility for "incitement to riot" where it rightfully belongs—on the management and its hired strikebreakers.

"It was all a mistake," said Mr. S. Duncan Black, president of the Black & Decker Company. "The men who, they thought, were strikebreakers entering the plant were deputy sheriffs, sent there to keep order."

"Oh, yeah?" answered a striker. "We are keeping order here now. There was order here before and order there is to be, unless they are going to try to pull another fast one on us."

"Their kind of 'order' don't go with us here," answered a third striker amid much laughter from the surrounding crowd.

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Romantic Lovers of the Revolution

JOSHUA KUNITZ

THE train dashes through White Russia. The people in the coupé are trying to sleep. My little Jewish friend from Algeria is restless, tossing about, mumbling. I, too, can't sleep. The clatter and wailing of the train, the long stops on darkened stations, the muffled talk outside the window, the station-masters' lonely whistles piercing the heavy night air and the endless rows of brooding birches and lofty pines fleeting past the window . . . I can't sleep. . . .

In the morning I'll be in Minsk. A couple of hours later in Niegoreloie, and then in the almost forgotten world of capitalism, unemployment, strikes, chauvinism, anti-semitism, wretchedness, hopelessness . . . Fascist Poland, Hitler Germany, Republican France, the States, New York, home, home, home. . . . Home?

No, I can't sleep. Nobody can sleep. We turn on the light again. We are up again. We talk again.

Incredible how much people can talk, discuss, how many subjects they can cover in a few hours in a train, especially on the way out of the U.S.S.R. Quite understandable, too: a stay here, be it ever so short, constitutes for most first visitors from advanced capitalist lands a very major, very stimulating and very challenging experience; it is like a journey made simultaneously through the remote past and the remote future—fascinating and somewhat confusing.

It's two a. m., but we keep on talking, telling of our experiences, comparing notes, recapitulating, summarizing, generalizing.

A YOUNG man, a tourist, reports that he had been accosted by a prostitute in Leningrad.

The old liberal lady looks incredulous. She refers to Dillon's book on the Soviet Union, written several years ago. "Now Dillon, a well-known authority on Russia," she declares categorically, "contradicts you on this. He says that even as far back as 1929 he saw no prostitutes in Leningrad."

The young man: "Ah, but Dillon was then in his seventies. In such matters you better take *my* word for it."

The old lady is distraught. She turns to me for a refutation of the awful slander of the Soviets.

Sadly I have to admit that this fellow is most likely stating a fact, since the neighborhood of an Intourist Hotel is the place where one is most likely to meet up with such an experience.

"But why?" argues the old lady, indignant at my betrayal. "With the economic causes of prostitution eliminated, and with the Soviet government's enlightened and humane methods of reclaiming these unfortunates, teaching them trades, putting them into jobs, removing the social stigma attached to them, one should imagine that this terrible evil has been done away with. And from what I have heard that is precisely what has happened."

I like the lady and I hate to disappoint her. But the best tribute to the Soviet Union is that even its most enthusiastic admirers can afford to look at the truth and tell it to others. Well, the truth is that prostitution has not been *completely* eliminated in the Soviet Union. A small residue of it exists and, in my opinion, is likely to exist for some time to come.

First, the liberal lady is a little too sanguine in her assertion that the economic causes of prostitution have been completely eliminated. True, there is no unemployment and whoever wishes to work can work. But wages while rapidly rising are still in many cases insufficiently high, especially those of the unskilled; and prices while rapidly falling are still insufficiently low, especially in clothes. There is not yet that great abundance that would ensure complete comfort to every man, woman and child in the land. The unskilled worker often finds it a little hard to make both ends meet. And where there is no universal abundance, the economic causes of prostitution have not been eradicated. For instance, an unskilled peasant girl finding herself in a Soviet city may, if exposed to bad influences, be lured into following the prostitutes' apparently easy way of earning a livelihood.

Second, the lady must also bear in mind that it is only eight years since the N.E.P. has been abandoned. The legacies of Czarism, war, famine and the N.E.P. could not possibly have been lived down in eight years. There were whole families of degenerates, there were mothers who themselves brought up their children in an atmosphere of crime and vice, there were hundreds of thousands of bezprizorni (homeless) children—plenty of potential reserves. The vast majority were reclaimed, but a small number of incorrigibles is certainly left.

So much for the supply. But it is well to remember that neither has the demand been completely done away with. Early marriages and comparatively easy divorces have reduced it enormously, but there are still hundreds of thousands of ill-mated couples and plenty of unmated men too shy, too busy, or queer, to follow the normal path of courtship to marriage. Marriages are not yet scientifically determined. Even Soviet society has not yet devised a way of bringing together people who if they met would be ideally mated. Finally, though it is not a very important factor, there are still foreign sailors coming into Soviet ports and there is still the type of tourist who comes here, not to study and observe, but to kill ennui, which in nine cases out of ten means sexual diversion. In 1930, I had in my group a retired business man. By the time we reached Moscow he became positively unbearable. I had to drop him. The wretch had a fit when I had suggested that the role of a leader was not that of a procurer.

Let me repeat: prostitution has been reduced to a minimum in the Soviet Union. There are people who have lived here for years who honestly believe that this particular evil does not exist any longer—so rare and inconspicuous has it become, and certainly such things as I had seen in Poland in 1931, when sixteen- and seventeen-year-old youngsters offered themselves for five zloty, and on being ignored lowered the price to four, then three, then two, then one—fifteen cents!—are inconceivable here. Such things as one sees in Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin are simply unimaginable.

But an infinitesimal residue of prostitution and other sexual vices persists, and it is likely to persist, though to an ever diminishing

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extent, until we have the superabundance inherent in a scientifically organized and managed harmonious Communist society.

THE liberal old lady looks glum. She has a very definite and very roseate notion of what the Soviet Union is like and any suggestion of darker shades tends to cast her into the depths of dejection.

I have observed three very distinct types of people interested in the Soviet Union: the realists, the skeptics and the romantics. The realists are those who have a sound understanding of the dialectics of historical processes and an adequate appreciation of the inevitable and dramatic conflict between the emerging and receding forces in any society, especially one in rapid revolutionary transformation. Unfortunately, among my tourists, auditors and readers, I have met few realists, and I feel unqualified to discuss them at any length.

More frequent are the skeptics. When they read a book or hear a lecture sympathetic to the Soviets, they tend not to believe. When they go to the Soviet Union they expect the worst. Almost invariably they are pleasantly surprised by what they find there.

The most prevalent are the romantic haters and lovers. These people read, listen, see and remember only the things that conform to their preconceived and, most often, distorted notions; other things don't exist even if placed under their very noses. My direct contact with the romantic haters has been slight. I dislike them most cordially, but, as in the case of the realists, I'm unqualified to discuss them. It is the romantic lovers I have met most, and it is they who have often proved the bane of my existence.

Oh, these romantic lovers of the Revolution, these gasping, panting, bubbling serenaders of the proletariat! When things were difficult here, they were a menace; and now that things go well, they are a bore. I have always urged my sister to flee romantic lovers as she would the plague. They are fickle, unsteady. They don't make good husbands or fathers or friends. The prose of everyday life, the sights, the odors, the touches, the irritations of intimacy are too much for their overwrought nerves. They run, they desert, they turn against you at the first feel of your material, earthy self, and they always blame *you* for it. You have disappointed them. You have (O horrors! horrors!) a birthmark on your left shoulder and an ingrown nail on your little toe. . . .

I recall one of those romantic lovers of the Revolution, a little, bald-headed, round-tummied shopkeeper from Brooklyn. In 1932 he went to the U.S.S.R. as a member of a large group, to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution. He was not in the Communist Party; he was a sympathizer, but redder than the reddest of Reds.

I met him and his group on the boat going to Bremen. He talked and talked and talked —rhapsodizing the Soviets. He infected the others. They were all in a state of peculiarly unhealthy, febrile exultation.

The year 1932, you will recall, was a hard year for the Soviets. I foresaw trouble.

Once the little shopkeeper, Meyers I think was his name, asked me to talk on the Soviet Union before his group. I agreed, deciding to myself right then to try to dissipate the romantic effluvia with which Meyers had enveloped his companions.

My talk was a realistic presentation of all the difficulties and unpleasantnesses the group might expect in the U.S.S.R. That, I felt, was the correct Bolshevik way of handling the situation. Poor Meyers! He broke out into a sweat when he got the first intimations of what I was saying. He sat right in front of me, his fists clenched, his head moving back and forth in violent disapproval, his eyes winking at me, begging me to stop. I felt like a surgeon, performing a painful but necessary operation. Before I was half through, however, Meyers slunk away. He refused to listen.

Later he came over, and said indignantly, "I can't forgive myself that I asked you to talk to us. I thought you were a friend, but you certainly didn't talk like a friend." I felt sorry for him, and sorrier still that he, of all people, was the one not to have heard what I had to say.

In Berlin the group had to wait for another contingent which was to join them in seven days. The first day or two Meyers was happy. He marched through the streets, throwing coins into the collection boxes held out by the young Communists, cried *Rot Front,* and lifted his pudgy little fist into the air (the Communist greeting in Germany). On the third day he became restless. Germany was a capitalist country, he was sick and tired of capitalism, he had been suffocating in it all his life. In a most undisciplined, unbolshevik way, he broke away from the group, and went by himself to Leningrad, where he would wait to meet the group.

Five days later I was in Leningrad. It was cold, drizzling. The city, the buildings, the people looked grey and cheerless. . . . The results of the successful completion of the First *Piatiletka* were still in the offing, but the strain and the hard work and the little food were stamped on every face in the endless, shuffling, ill-clad crowds.

The first person I bumped into in the lobby of the Europa Hotel was my old friend Meyers. It was he, yet it was not he. His face was drawn, there were dark rings under his eyes, his lips puckered as if he were just on the verge of bursting into tears.

"Hello, Meyers, how are you? How is the world treating you? How are things in the Soviet Union?"

In answer to all my questions, Meyers, his ebullience all gone now, toddled over with a hangdog expression, shook my hand sadly, looked around as if afraid of being overheard, brought his face closer to mine, and whispered: "Oi *rotten* and *how* rotten!"

Another romantic had turned his back on the subject of his "great love."

MEYERS had refused to listen. There are others who listen but don't hear, or hear only the things they wish to hear. There was, for instance, the beautiful girl with the jet-black eyes, intense, haunting. Wherever I came before audiences in New York (and let me remark parenthetically that I always took pains to point out the

difficulties in the U.S.S.R.), she would be there in the front rows directly opposite me, vibrating to everything I said. I am only human. Her response was inspiring. It grew on me. It became a necessity. As soon as I entered a hall, my eyes would sweep the front rows to make sure she was there. And she always *was* there, always warm, believing, responsive.

I met her in Moscow, in the winter of 1932. "You are Mr. Kunitz," she declared, as she parked herself opposite me at the table of the hotel dining room. "You don't know me, but I was one of your devotees in New York. I used to come to hear you lecture on the Soviet Union."

In my most gallant manner I assured her that I remembered her. I even told her how her presence at lectures had become indispensable to me, and how I had missed her when she had suddenly vanished from the scene.

Dismissing my gallantry with a perfunctory smile, she proceeded to inform me that it was largely on the basis of my lectures that she had taken a leave of absence from her job and that she had come here for a year to help build socialism.

I was quite touched by this tangible proof of the power of my eloquence. It made people give up jobs! Cross oceans! Travel to remote lands! It infused in them a great desire to build socialism! . . .

"I am going back soon," she said suddenly. I sensed a disturbing overtone in her voice, but, without affording me the opportunity to ask questions, she continued, "I have been here three weeks." Then suddenly again: "You too will be back in the

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United States soon, I guess, lecturing again?"

I told her she guessed right.

She: "Well, I'll be coming to your lectures."

I: "Very flattered."

She: "I'll be sitting in the front rows again."

I: "I'll try to excel myself to meet with your approval."

She: "I'll be looking into your eyes again."

I: "And I will be addressing myself only to you."

She (rising to leave, a look of profound contempt in her eyes): "Yes, I'll be coming to your lectures again; I'll be sitting in the front rows again; I'll be looking straight into your eyes again and see whether you'll dare lie as much about the Soviet Union as you lied in the past. . . ."

THERE is another type. People who accept enthusiastically until a deep prejudice is violated—then everything goes flooey.

In 1930 I went down to the Crimea with a middle-aged American couple from Alabama. They were southern aristocrats, refined, broad-minded, and, despite their wealth and class ties, surprisingly enthusiastic over the work of the Soviets.

While in the Crimea, we visited Livadia, the summer palace of the Czars, now used as a rest home for workers and collective farmers. We were received very cordially. The workers and peasants surrounded us, showed us through the place, asked questions about America, admired our clothes and cameras and made us feel quite important.

My American couple, especially the lady, were delighted with the place, the people and their hospitality. They enjoyed the warm attention they were getting, and our day in Livadia promised to be the pleasantest we had yet spent in the Union.

But then something happened, something dreadful, unbelievable, catastrophic.

As we were standing on the spacious porch, chatting with our many hosts, a young fellow came sprinting through the gates, shouting: "They are coming. They are coming. . . ." A terrific hubbub started. Someone ran into the dining room and began to bang out the "International" on the piano; the rest of the people on the premises made a dash toward the gates. We who until a minute ago were the center of universal attention, now stood abandoned, forgotten.

"Somebody very important, I suppose," opined the lady, a little piqued by the thought that there could be people coming to Livadia more important and more deserving of attention than her husband and she.

"Maybe we'll see Stalin," drawled the gentleman hopefully.

Meanwhile the group at the gate had grown. There were easily a hundred people there, when a shining car pulled up at the entrance. The sounds of loud and prolonged cheering reverberating through the clear air us even more eagerly expectant. It is seldom that a tourist has occasion to see at close range the important people of the country he visits. We strained our eyes, looking for the pipe and drooping mustache we had come to know from the ubiquitous pictures. We saw the group at the gate break into two, forming an aisle. We saw them applauding as the door of the car opened and . . . my companions gasped: Two laughing black men in berets leaped onto the path.

I do not know who those Negroes were or where they had come from, America, West Indies, or Africa. They must have been good revolutionists who had come to some congress or conference and were sent to Livadia for a rest. Naturally, in the presence of such distinguished guests, revolutionary representatives of the exploited Negro masses, my Americans, a couple of bourgeois tourists, sank into obscurity. The cheering crowd with the two Negroes in their midst passed us and not one charitable look was cast in our direction. We simply ceased to exist.

"Let's go," said the lady in a strangely rasping voice. Quietly, her husband and I followed her to the car which was waiting to take us back to Yalta.

The shock of being ignored in favor of two "niggers" was too much for my liberal Southerners. I tried to explain. It was useless. "The best 'nigger' is a dead 'nigger'," was the only comment the lady deigned to make.

After that nothing was good in the Soviet Union.

I ASKED a Negro comrade, a writer, a realist, how he was finding life in Moscow. "I feel like a deep-valley dweller who suddenly finds himself on the top of the highest conceivable mountain. I feel as if a monstrous weight, as if the entire pressure of the atmosphere had been taken off my back. My heart thumps. I am dizzy."

Rather Shall We on a Swift and Sudden Day

PETER YORK

And let us cease to hope that in these days
the thrust at victory is armed with compromise
and waiting; that in the simple ways
of silence, deeds of subtlety, a guise
of friendly innocence will nicely cheat
the imbecilic fiends. The fiends are steel
entrenched and are not slain with weapons of
a wheat and whiskey bill, a trench of tariffs, and
a helmet fashioned from a tax on hats.

And there is darkness in such a silent way
of being: despair is clothed in deference:
timidity is tricked out in a guise
of taste: only on the fragile floors
of hopelessness lie the soft carpets
of humility—when masses stand
support is rendered by a sterner stone.

In these days—no longer
compromise and asking: for they have clothed
us in oppression when our backs were cold:
have built a house of hatred when we asked
for rest: their fields bore only bitterness when
we reaped for bread: they who doctor with patience
prescribe a sorry antidote for pain.

Rather shall we Comrades on that swift
and sudden day arise: a million feet,
we stand upon the sands of sorrow hardened
into stone, and in our healthy hands
our bayonets ground on bitterness and
our bullets dipped in gall are deadly, aimed
with a straight spasm of pain.

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Armed Camps in Steel

JOHN MULLEN

WHEN the United States Steel Corporation "voluntarily" raises wages and blandly offers vacations to its employes—that is news! And behind that news lies a story: the story of a gathering storm that will sweep through the nation with hurricane effect, during the next few months vitally affecting the economic and political scene.

Steel, America's basic industry and one of its biggest, is about to be organized. And with all due respect to the splendid traditions and fighting ability of organized workers in lighter industries, the job of organizing and striking a steel mill is not quite as simple as bringing the needle-trades workers from the third floor of the Garment Center Building down on strike. It's far more difficult than that. Organizers and workers in steel towns have to face the most brutal (and very capable) union-busters the employing class of this nation has ever developed. Machine guns are the steel-masters' substitutes for round-table conferences. In the great 1919 steel strike, the Pittsburgh area alone was infested with 35,000 armed deputies, peace officers, thugs, coal and iron police, State mounted police and agency rats. The Steel Trust has always followed a policy of spending a million dollars, if necessary, to break a strike in a mill which yields a yearly profit of a fraction of that amount. They are willing to pay one man alone, a "Public Relations Counsel," $75,000 a year to disseminate open-shop-company-union propaganda among the workers in the industry and to the press, schools, libraries and churches. The Steel Trust is ready and willing to flush the gutters of the Homesteads, Ambridges, Cantons and the Birminghams red with the blood of slain strikers to maintain the super-profits of the open shop.

For years, they have been flaunting every semblance of civil rights and democracy in the steel towns. They have gripped with an iron fist everything from the local church to the undertaker in the company towns.

The steel industry is the backbone of capitalist America—the "production of the means of production." The men who would organize steel must be prepared to fight a long, heart-breaking battle. And now these men have at last come on the scene. The Committee for Industrial Organization, headed by John L. Lewis, chief of the United Mine Workers, and backed by the most progressive forces in the American Federation of Labor, is already in the field. The campaign is at this moment gathering momentum. Backed with a $500,000 organizing fund (and there's more where that came from) the C.I.O. is undertaking the toughest organizing job on the calendar.

This week, experienced organizers are entering the Chicago Calumet territory, the steel vein that runs from Cleveland, Ohio, to Weirton, W. Virginia; the Youngstown Mahoning Valley area and the nerve center of the entire industry, Pittsburgh. Others are on their way to Birmingham, the nation's fifth largest steel center. These men, under the direction of the Steel Organizing Committee, will guide the campaign. They are old-timers for the most part, men who have taken the bumps and organized thousands of workers.

If one is to understand the nature and significance of the drive which they are beginning one must know a little of the history of unionism and struggles in steel.

For years following the defeat of the historic Homestead strike in 1892, the industry was virtually unorganized. The twelve-hour day and the seven-day week prevailed. Mounted State police, the dread helmeted constabulary, and uniformed coal and iron police terrorized the towns. Civil rights of the most elementary sort were unknown in the industry. Where the companies didn't own the steel towns outright, they controlled the municipal officials through graft.

The steel corporations followed a policy of deliberately hiring certain percentages of European peasants who were blood-feud enemies in Europe—Bulgarians and Serbians, Macedonians and Greeks, Yugo-Slavs and Roumanians and so on. These peasants, recently arrived in this country, carried their national antagonisms with them into the mills. Standing aloof, with better-paying jobs, were the native Americans, many of whom looked on the lot of them as "hunkies."

BUT despite innumerable difficulties, such as a reluctant and sabotaging A. F. of L. officialdom, a rising post-war reaction and a falling steel market, William Z. Foster, master organizer, succeeded in bringing 365,000 steel workers out on strike in 1919. The strike aroused the nation and even though it was defeated after a bitter struggle, huge gains were made in working hours and conditions. But the unions in the industry were shot to pieces.

From 1919, until the N.R.A. period of 1933, only 5,000 steel workers had any sort of a union and a very poor sort indeed—the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, led by ultra-conservative and aged Mike Tighe, its self-perpetuating president. Composed entirely of highly skilled workers, the union existed precariously on the very fringes of the industry, in mills of independent companies where it was merely tolerated, so long as it gave them no trouble.

But there was little danger of trouble from Mike Tighe and his little clique of vice-presidents, who steadily drew their $90 or $100 each week. Tighe was at peace with God and the Steel Trust. The very thought of a strike made him turn green around the gills and was sufficient to start him shouting about the red, white and blue. He spent his time signing sliding-scale contracts with the smaller firms and preaching class-collaboration to his membership. It was harder for an unskilled or semi-skilled steel worker to get into the Amalgamated Association under Tighe's leadership than into an afternoon tea given by Mrs. August Belmont at the Ritz. Tighe personified everything that was corrupted by the employing class in the leadership of the American Federation of Labor. Such was the Amalgamated Association between the years of 1919 and 1933.

In 1929, a new virile force entered the field. Convinced that neither Tighe of the Amalgamated Association, nor the Green leadership of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor intended to do anything about organizing the steel workers, the Communists organized groups of progressive and militant steel workers into the Metal Workers Industrial League. The League was essentially a propaganda organization, spreading and popularizing the program of industrial unionism, trade union democracy and militant struggle. It rooted itself in small groups in the very heart of steel—in the big corporation mills of United States Steel, Republic, Bethlehem. Between the year of its founding and 1932, it secured enough followers and built sufficient prestige as an organization to become a union. The Steel and Metal Workers Union was organized in Pittsburgh in 1932, with a membership of 4,000 steel workers. Its ideological influence reached into every center of the industry and its program for industrial unionism became widespread.

In 1933, the unionization wave that swept through the basic industries of this country brought the membership of the left-wing Steel and Metal Workers Union up to 15,000 members. It conducted and won strikes in the smaller mills and tackled the bigger mills, while Tighe closed his ears to the growing clamor of thousands of steel workers who wanted to join the Amalgamated Association.

The widespread activities of the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union plus the great unionization and strike movement that swept the nation in the N.R.A. summer and fall period of 1933 finally dislodged the complacent Tighe leadership of the Amalgamated Association and forced it into action. In a brief period (late 1933 and early 1934) the Amalgamated swelled its ranks from

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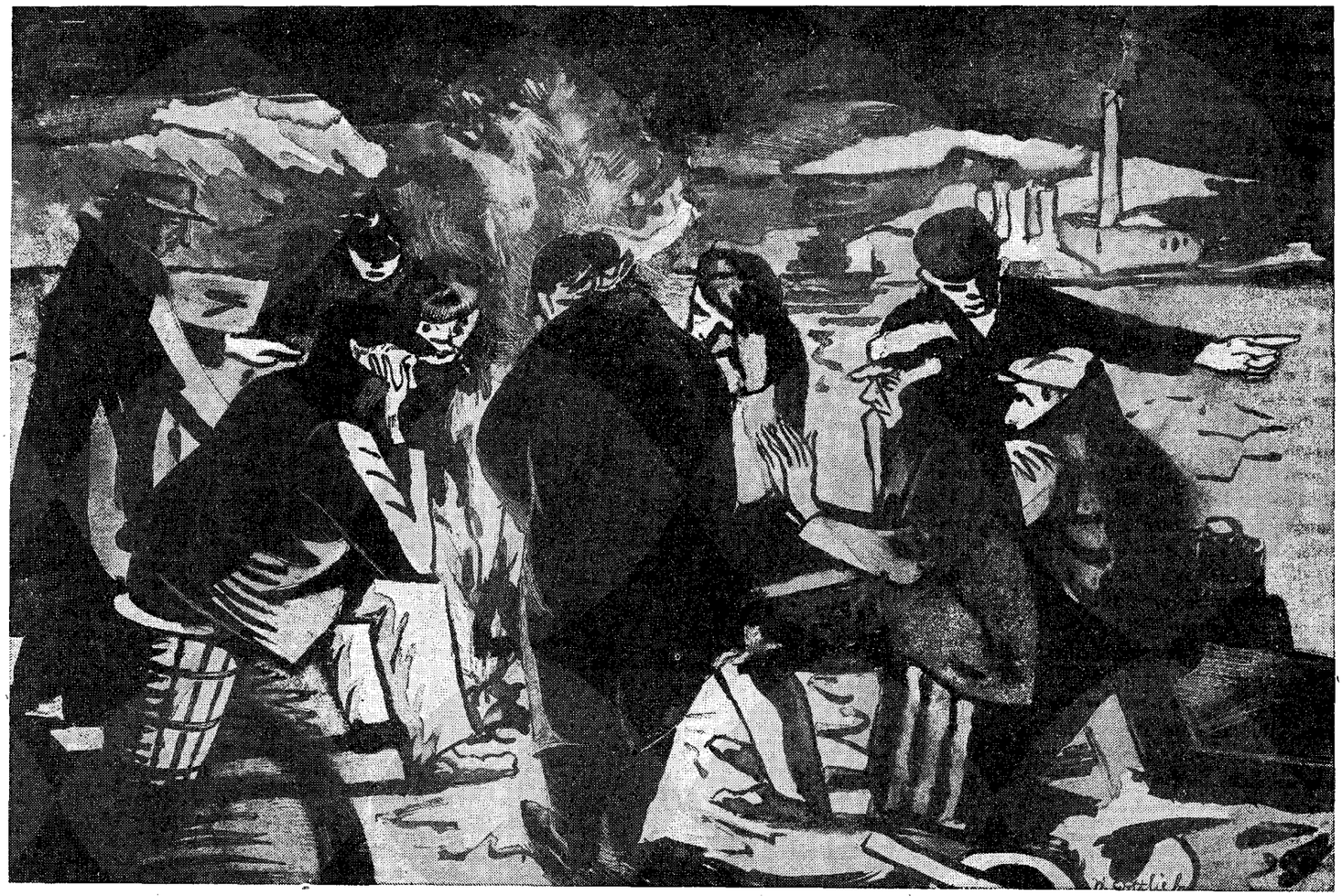

LITHOGRAPH

Harry Gottlieb

5,000 to approximately 100,000 members. The Amalgamated officials soon found themselves faced with a growing strike wave. They found that their old tactics, of either not "giving sanctions" or ignoring the strikes of the new locals, did not work. The steel workers pressed them for action. They asked Tighe and his worried cohorts what the hell they were being paid for if not to get them action and results. New voices were raised in the ranks. Local leaders of the Amalgamated began to mount the platforms of meetings and call for delegations to the mill bosses to demand recognition of their union. They began to talk about wage increases, the six-hour day, of a more militant leadership and policy for their union. The fighting mood continued to grow and the first definite signs of a conscious progressive movement of the rank and file in the Amalgamated Association, occurred with the opening of the 59th Annual Convention in Pittsburgh, in April, 1934.

For long years conventions of the union had been cut-and-dried annual gatherings where hand-picked delegates met in a "picnic" atmosphere and voted "aye" to every motion made by the Tighe machine. There was no opposition nor any desire for opposing the smug policies of the leadership. But all that was changed at the 59th convention. The echo of Mike Tighe's gavel had no sooner died away, than a delegate was on his feet, with a motion that left the machine gasping. The delegate, new in the union and fresh from the mills, motioned that: dues and initiations must be lowered, per capita to the Grand Lodge must be lowered; and that the convention "shall work out and present a set of demands to the steel companies, with a ten-day ultimatum for a general strike if the demands are not granted."

The assorted vice-presidents of the union went into a huddle with Tighe to discuss what measures should be taken against such unheard-of sacrilege. But before they were able to work out any sort of a counter-offensive, the motions from the floor came hot and heavy. Maneuvers by Tighe to unseat rank-and-file delegates for non-payment of per capita were swept aside.

Taking power completely out of the hands of the Tighe machine, the delegates elected a "Committee of Ten," and formulated their program of demands for presentation to the companies—a Four-Point Program. It called for $1.00 an hour minimum wage, with proportional increases on all jobs; the six-hour day, five-day week; abolition of the wage differential between the North and South.

The "Committee of Ten," composed of energetic rank-and-filers, was empowered to present the demands to the companies on May 21, 1934, and call a special convention on June 20, to poll a general strike vote if the demands were not granted by then.

The gathering adjourned with the old machine missing on all cylinders and Mike Tighe making a public statement to the press that "I wash my hands of the whole business!"

That was an historical moment for the steel workers. Never before were the objective conditions so favorable. They had virtually ousted the age-old obstacle of the Tighe group, had aroused the workers of the industry to a feverish enthusiasm and had secured the leadership and confidence of the workers. The union movement generally was on the offensive.

Within the hands of the "Committee of Ten" was more concentrated potential power than any similar group of workers had had in many years. They had but to act swiftly and with confidence and the day would be the steel workers'.

But the "Committee of Ten" muffed the ball. Instead of going to the steel workers and preparing for the general strike—they went to Washington, D. C. They honestly believed they could accomplish their aims by securing the aid of Roosevelt in forcing the Steel Trust to come to terms. While the committee ran from congressman to senator and tried to see Roosevelt, the steel workers chafed and strained at the bit. There

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was a lot of organizing to be done and they believed the "Committee of Ten" would come into the field and do it. But the committee remained in the Capitol. In the meantime, neither William Green, Mike Tighe, General Johnson, Roosevelt, nor the Steel Trust lost time in doing their job—the job of spiking the strike.

The Steel Trust in the meantime prepared for war. The steel towns began to swarm with armed hoodlums. Extra barbed wire—some of it charged with high voltage electricity, was erected around the plant. Searchlights that could sweep a town were mounted. Tons of food, thousands of cots were shipped into the mills.

Tighe meanwhile fluttered around Washington under the nervous wing of William Green. They talked to the "Committee of Ten" collectively and individually. They raised the red scare. Hair-curdling predictions were made to the committee members, "if they insisted in pursuing their mad course." The government would be put "in an embarrassing position." The whole N.R.A. program would be destroyed, they declared.

Eventually, wavering was discernible in the ranks of the steel workers' representatives. By the time the special convention of June 20 took place the "Committee of Ten" was virtually in the vest pocket of Green and Tighe.

The convention again opened in Pittsburgh with the nation agog with excitement. The steel workers still wanted to fight. But the groundwork for the sellout had been laid.

William Green spoke to the delegates and gave them the "personal promise of Roosevelt" that all grievances would be quickly adjusted by setting up the Steel Labor Board. The gag worked. No strike was called. The delegates returned home disgusted. The steel workers were bitterly disappointed. The golden opportunity faded away, unused.

But a group of the progressive forces, led by Clarence Irwin, a highly-skilled Youngstown steel worker, refused to accept defeat. For many long months, in the face of expulsions affecting 90 percent of the entire union (nineteen lodges, totalling tens of thousands of members) the progressive group carried on their fight for industrial unionism, trade union democracy and the organization of the industry.

Their persistent efforts finally reached into the last convention of the American Federation of Labor. John L. Lewis and other powerful figures took up the fight. The work begun by the progressives eventually found fertile field in the leftward swing of the industrial union movement in the A.F. of L.

Outspoken and hard-hitting John L. Lewis, now leading the way in the drive to organization, may not be able to present a record all on the credit side of the ledger. He has many times in the past incurred the wrath of very progressive elements in the American Federation of Labor with whom he now sides. Many old-timers in the mine fields and left-wing organizations find it hard to condone the strong-arm tactics he had often used to maintain control over his own union.

Today, Lewis is in conflict with those very elements in the labor movement that these old-timers have been fighting for years. He is conducting a holy war against the craft unionists led by the Green-Frey-Hutchison clique at the helm of the A.F. of L. There is, however, a reason for Lewis' actions. He indicated these reasons at the last convention of the A.F. of L. in October, 1935. In a dramatic speech on the floor of that historic gathering, Lewis revealed the key to his present actions when he said:

> The organization I represent has an interest in this question. [The organization of the steel workers.—J. M.] Our people [the miners] work in a great industry. . . . They struggle against great odds and against great influence and the intensity of their struggle and the weight of their burden is greatly increased by reason of the fact that the American Federation of Labor has not organized the steel industry and the few industries similarly situated. We are anxious to have collective bargaining established in the steel industry and our interest in that is to that degree selfish, because our people know that if the workers were organized in the steel industry and collective bargaining there was an actuality, it would remove the incentive of the great captains of steel industry to destroy and punish and harass our people who work in the captive coal mines throughout this country owned by the steel industry. . . .

Steel cannot be organized effectively on the basis of divided craft unions. Therein lies the reason for the bitter fight today between the Lewis industrial unionists and the Green craft unionists.

Said Lewis on this question:

> If you go in there [steel—J. M.] with your craft unions, they will mow you down like the Italian machine guns . . . mow down the Ethiopians. . . . They will mow you down and laugh while they are doing it and ridicule your lack of business acumen, ridicule your lack of ordinary business sagacity in running your own affairs, because of the caviling in your own councils and the feebleness of your methods. . . .

Lewis is striding forward, impelled by two distinct forces—the rising tide of mass pressure in the ranks of the union movement for progressive policies and his own desire to build a steel bulwark around the United Mine Workers, which, strong as it is, is by no means invulnerable.

What will happen when the most progressive forces of the American Federation of Labor tackle steel? What chances are there for success in (1) organizing the majority of the steel workers into one industrial union; and (2) winning the objectives of the campaign of recognition of the union, better conditions; and (3) carrying through a successful strike?

For a proper evaluation, the past and present must be considered. An analysis of the past hinges around what happened seventeen years ago when, under the brilliant leadership of William Z. Foster, the gigantic general steel strike took place in September, 1919.

Then, as now, a big organizing drive was launched in a virtually unorganized steel industry. Approximately 365,000 struck. But at that point, the similarity between the possible course of the present drive, and that of 1919, stops cold.

In 1919 the A.F. of L. attempted, over Foster's disagreement with the tactics and strategy, to organize the workers into twenty-four craft unions. The drive was conducted under the jurisdiction of a general board on which the twenty-four crafts were represented. Result: conflict and sabotage. Today, the drive will be carried through under a united leadership and organized upon the principle of industrial unionism—one big all-inclusive union.

Vitally important in comparison of the two periods (1919-1936) is the fact that in 1919, Foster was faced with the following extreme difficulties. There was a growing post-war sweep of reaction and the open-shop drive of the employers. The American Federation of Labor had passed its artificially attained war-time peak of strength and was in decline; the steel market was rapidly falling.

Today, these factors, all of paramount importance, are reversed. The steel workers now have the advantage of a growing American Federation of Labor, taking the offensive on many fronts; a greater leeway in exercising civil liberties, because of the presidential election period; and a rapidly rising steel production, brought about by a favorable market. And finally, seventeen years of valuable experience on the picket lines, and struggle generally, have brought forward hundreds of excellently trained rank-and-file leaders in the steel industry and surrounding trades.

The prospects for the steel workers are bright.

There is a new corps of splendid organizers, the rank-and-file leaders in steel, men who have never been contaminated with the old class-collaboration ideology that has gripped the American Federation of Labor for years.

These are the men who will organize the hundreds of steel towns under the general leadership of the "Steel Workers Organizing Committee" led by John L. Lewis.

Tighe and his ilk have no commanding position in the steel workers' struggles from now on. Lewis deftly eliminated Tighe from the picture because he was shrewd enough to know that the steel workers would no longer join a union where Tighe and his kind have any real authority.

With the powerful Committee for Industrial Organization backing them, supplying money and generalship, the steel workers are now ready for action. That action will inevitably leave an impression on the whole of the American trade union movement and will lay a foundation for something that has been lacking in the American Federation of Labor ever since it was organized—a fortress of steel.

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Our Readers' Forum

What Happened to "Fury"

It is unfortunate that in his review of *Fury*, Kenneth Fearing adopted such an off-handish attitude. Social films, films that are progressive in content and form, are a rarity in Hollywood. And when a director and his crew manage to break through with a Fury it is something to cheer about. The case of G. W. Pabst who cooled his heels in this burg for a couple of years and then was credited with a dud known as *A Modern Hero* (a film he didn't direct) is still fresh in some of our memories. Fritz Lang, another Hitler refugee, also cooled his heels (a year and a half) until he got a chance to do something decent.

Perhaps Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer thought that the production of this anti-lynching story would relieve a little of the stigma of their ban on *It Can't Happen Here*. In any case Lang not only directed it but he wrote the script.

There hasn't been a film in years that has been directed and cut with such craftsmanship. In many ways *Fury* is weak. For instance, it doesn't suggest that the real sufferers of lynching are the Negroes. And the personal story of Joe Wilson isn't sufficiently integrated with the first part of the film. But the sum-total effect of *Fury* should not be underestimated. Not that it was released to the satisfaction of Fritz Lang, who objected to the many concessions he had to make in the name of "box-office." And before the film was completed Lang and Mankiewicz were not on speaking terms.

I have examined Lang's original script. It is revealing. In the first reel Joe and Katherine go to a movie. They walk in on a newsreel:

Announcer's voice: "Will Vickery, political leader of the Independent Party, addressing a recent banquet."

Close-up — Vickery: "A typical Western statesman, with a twang in his voice and a professional trick of shoving out his jaw when he says 'American'."

Vickery: "The American people, dedicated to equality and justice for all, want no Communism, Fascism, or any other such dandruff in their hair! Like our vigilantes of old, we shall continue in this Democracy to settle things in our own way, by continuing to place our trust in the sense of *fair-play* and *common sense* of the American People!"

It is this same Vickery who in the released version appears for the first time as the politician who prevents the Governor from sending the National Guard to the lynch scene. The quoted sequence appearing at the beginning of the film would have established the politician as a sharply-drawn character instead of a stereotyped villain. In this same scene Joe gets into an argument with an "Objector" (whom Lang describes as "not an alien type"). Joe is taken in by Vickery's demagogy.

Finally Joe says: "If you don't like it in this country why don't you go back where you came from?"

Objector: "Not me, Buddy, I come from Scranton, P-a."

I found the entire script was conceived along this line. Lang was not unconscious of the Negro situation. He made a definite attempt to link the Negro with his anti-lynching film. In the trial sequence where Lang has the entire country listening-in on the proceedings and the attorney says: "But *no* one can dare to defend the lynching of an innocent man!"—the words "innocent man" are cut into the scene: "A group of Negro workmen listening to radio in an old auto." It is significant of the pressure of the Hays office when Lang had to prefix the scene—in the script, mind you—with the two words: IF POSSIBLE!

It is really remarkable that the film was released as it was. And it is significant that Metro has not renewed Lang's contract. Possibly this is an attempt to prevent his working in Hollywood. Lang refuses to make just any film. And the audience must see to it that he stays in Hollywood and works —and that he makes the kind of films he wants to make.

Hollywood, Calif. FRANK HASKELL.

Tacoma's United Front

H. D. Baker's excellent letter (THE NEW MASSES, June 2, '36) on the resistance to Tacoma's fascist flag ordinance omits the part played by the Socialist-Communist united front in organizing mass violation of this illegal ordinance.

Liberals and labor unionists were drawn in to pack every meeting of the city council, with Communists and Socialists leading the analysis of and verbal attacks against the law. Trade unions were visited and shown the importance of protesting. Mass meetings were held. A civil liberties committee was organized. When the Socialists successfully defied the police at the Norman Thomas meeting, none cheered the "illegal" Socialist red banner more than the Communists.

The May Day parade, liberally sprinkled with red flags, was also a united-front affair, with various trade unions and other groups taking part. This Tacoma united front has endured over a year. It has vastly added to the prestige and influence of the two parties and has been without a single breach of faith on either side.

Out of it, in our activity against William Dudley Pelley's so-called "Christian" party, a real people's front has grown, of which more will be heard.

Tacoma, Wash. ROBERT J. PEARSALL.

A Marxian Quarterly

Despite the remarkable expansion in the range of the left-wing periodical press during the last few years, there is still lacking in America a journal exclusively given over to theoretical Marxist studies. A group of younger members of our university faculties are now ready to announce that a magazine has been established to fulfill this need. "Science and Society: A Marxian Quarterly" is designed to work out the application of Marxism to America; to foster the increasing interest in Marxism in our college communities and among intellectual groups throughout the country; to supply a demand for the publication of Marxist studies already in existence or in preparation; and to stimulate, by the existence of such a journal, further Marxist studies. "Science and Society" will print articles with a Marxist orientation in economics, politics, history, philosophy, science, literature and the arts.

The editors call for contributions of articles. The first issue will appear in October.

W. T. PARRY.

6½ Holyoke St., Cambridge, Mass.

Farrell and the Church

From comments I have received, I realize that the last paragraph in my review of James T. Farrell's *A Note on Literary Criticism* is being misinterpreted. The paragraph reads:

"Certainly, the fact that the Catholic Book Club recommends *A Note on Literary Criticism* illuminates the nature of its Marxism."

It must be pointed out that in *A Note on Literary Criticism*, as in all of Farrell's books, there is nothing to give aid and comfort to the Catholic hierarchy. As a matter of fact there is a strong attack in the book on the system of St. Thomas Aquinas, the official philosopher of the Church. Nevertheless it remains significant that Farrell's version of Marxist criticism makes the book so agreeable to an official Catholic body that they are ready to draw him into their own united front.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Soviet Science Abroad

Lenin once remarked to the effect that members of every occupational group (particularly among the professions) who are advanced in their thinking, will become impressed and gradually convinced of the superiority and desirability of true socialism not only for general reasons but particularly through appreciation of its benefits to their own special field. Support of this assertion is rapidly increasing in the United States. A few odd evidences may well be mentioned here.

In the American Journal of Physical Anthropology for January-March Professor B. N. Vishevski of Leningrad (Institute of Anthropology and Ethnography, Academy of Sciences of U.S.S.R.) writes on "Anthropology in U.S.S.R. in the Course of 17 Years (1917 to 1934)." The new chairs in this subject are mentioned, the new research institutes and laboratories and a number of expeditions and extensive investigations are more fully described, with references to publications.

An extremely interesting account, "The U.S.S.R. in the Arctic," by S. S. Shipman, appears in Natural History for May (the journal of the American Museum of Natural History). Descriptions are given of the rapid increase in scientific expeditions, in trade and the development of production in a large number of raw materials, also in education, hygiene and social organizations for the population of the vast arctic regions. The excellent morale is stressed, also the full cooperation among all types of groups, which could hardly have been accomplished under a competitive system.

In Science for May, Professor Robert F. Yarkes reviews "Infant Ape and Human Child," by N. Kohts of Moscow. High tribute is paid these two volumes, with high expectations for the third.

Meanwhile the subscribers to the Sixth International Congress of Genetics, which was held at Ithaca, New York, during the summer of 1932, have been notified that the Seventh Congress is to be held in 1937 in the Soviet Union.

The above notices are offered as suggestions of where material may be found for demonstrating the advantages to certain fields of science of a socialized economy.

Williamsburg, Mass. AMOS OGDEN GARE.

"A New Interest"

I wish to express my appreciation to you for the fine reviewing of new recordings.

A symphony buyer in most records—your splendid write-ups on swing have given me a new and different interest. Thanks, and congratulations.

Huntington Park, Calif. NED RAMSAY.

Bibliography of Marxism

I am considering the compilation of a bibliography of Marxism. The list would include books, pamphlets and at least some magazine articles. Such a bibliography would have varied uses in libraries for checking and reference purposes, in workers' schools for teaching, etc., and as a guide for individual work and study. Nothing along this line has been done in English, though the need for a bibliography on Marxism has been frequently expressed. Though the task will be somewhat simpler than might at first appear, it would be a rather heavy task for one man, and I have been wondering if any readers of THE NEW MASSES who have a taste for bibliographical work might be interested in collaborating on the project. . . . The most important thing would be access to a large library and an interest in the work. Anyone who is interested in the project can communicate with me at Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas.

HENRY BLACK.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

American Writers Look Left

This review appeared on the front page of The London Times book section and made a sensation in the British literary world. As a significant contrast we may cite the treatment given by The New York Times to the two notable books with which it deals and which sprang out of the activities of the history-making American Writers' Congress of April, 1935. The only space given to these books in The New York Times was in their English literary correspondent's column, commenting on the furore caused by their publication in England and the speculations upon the identity of the anonymous London Times reviewer, whose opinions follow.—THE EDITORS.

LAST April there was held in New York City a three-day Congress of "American revolutionary writers." Its purpose was to bring together in fraternal and technical discussion writers of standing "who have clearly indicated their sympathy with the revolutionary cause" and "do further, to establish a permanent League of American Writers, affiliated with the International Union of Revolutionary Writers." Similar congresses have been held in other countries of late, mostly it may be without exciting much attention except in circles already sympathetic, nevertheless there would seem justification for allowing a special significance in this case.

Among its sponsors were such well-known figures as Theodore Dreiser, Lincoln Steffens, Robert Herrick, Lewis Mumford, John Dos Passos, Maxwell Bodenheim, Erskine Caldwell, Michael Gold, Waldo Frank, Kenneth Burke, Malcolm Cowley and John Howard Lawson, such able critics as Joseph Freeman, Joshua Kunitz and Granville Hicks, such vital newer writers as Jack Conroy, Langston Hughes, Nelson Algren, Robert Cantwell, Edward Dahlberg, Ben Field, James T. Farrell, Grace Lumpkin, William Rollins, Josephine Herbst, Paul Peters, Fielding Burke and Meridel Le Sueur. During the three days some twenty-odd papers were presented to and discussed by the Congress, which concluded the proceedings by duly establishing the proposed League, with Waldo Frank as chairman and an Executive Committee and National Council which included, in addition to many of the above, Van Wyck Brooks, Alfred Kreymborg, Sidney Howard, Matthew Josephson and Clifford Odets. This collocation of names can scarcely fail to be impressive to any who have followed current production in American literature with any particularity; but we must press our claim farther. Mr. Frank, in a brief foreword to the published record of the Congress, suggests that

> its principal achievement was, perhaps, to integrate elements and forces of American cultural life which, heretofore, have been anarchic, into the beginnings of a literary movement, both broad and deep, which springs from an alliance of writers and artists with the working classes.

IN FACT, the movement was already there, plain for all to see, both the one approach to a concerted activity apparent in recent American writing and the source of a high proportion of its most striking work. With the strange sterility which seems to have overcome so many of the older writers —practically none of whom have of late years produced works at all comparable to those which established their reputations—the only other even remotely approximating performance has been that of the younger regionalist writers of the South and Middle West. But regionalism, for all and indeed not least in its bright particular stars—Faulkner, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Ruth Suckow, Glenway Westcott, Vardis Fisher, John Steinbeck, Josephine Johnson—is of its nature local and incohesive. It has produced some attractive writing, a lot of it to be found in the ephemeral pages of transient magazines, but its brightest vision is invariably of the past, and that of the present and future one primarily of despair or at any rate despondency. To claim that its country roots are set deeper and must outlive a mainly urban "proletarianism" seems at the moment to set mere prophecy, a hope, against the tangible evidence. Thomas Wolfe, a name of weight to set in any scale-pan, may be assessed as regionalist, but his work transcends any such restriction, and in any case his vision has scarcely yet declared itself, with all his abundance. Moreover, in Erskine Caldwell, Fielding Burke and others, regionalism and proletarian effect if not intention appear to meet and mingle. Josephine Johnson is another case which might almost as well be set on one side of the fence as the other.

BEYOND all border-line quibblings of classification, however, what is generally recognized as proletarian literature clearly carries the day by sheer quantity of estimable writing. The most casual reader of contemporary American fiction can scarcely fail to have been impressed by the virile and urgent quality of many recent studies of the lives of American workers, portrayed generally either in industrial discontents and conflicts or in the deeper degradation of unemployment under depression conditions. In the former category it may be, perhaps, sufficient reminder to recall, as works which have appeared in this country, Grace Lumpkin's *To Make My Bread* and Fielding Burke's *Call Home the Heart* (both stories of the Gastonia textile strike), William Rollins' more sophisticated *The Shadow Before,* Robert Cantwell's sombre *The Land of Plenty,* Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited* and Catherine Brody's *Nobody Starves.* In the latter the books of Edward Dahlberg and Nelson Algren's quite recent *Somebody in Boots* come at once to mind as instances only; and were the intention to make even a minimum list of writers who have done still more distinctive work treating of such subjects generally it would be impossible to omit, among the novelists, John Dos Passos, Michael Gold, Mary Heaton Vorse, Albert Halper, Arnold B. Armstrong, James T. Farrell, Myra Page and Edward Newhouse and among the short-story writers Caldwell, Ben Field, Whitaker Chambers, Langston Hughes, Benjamin Appel, Joseph Kalar, Louis Mamet, Alfred Morang and Meridel Le Sueur.

Even these lists omit as many as they include, nor do they take account of such noteworthy writers as Edwin Seaver, Josephine Herbst, John Herrmann and, above all, Waldo Frank in his *The Death and Birth of David Markand,* who deal not directly with the workers but rather with the middle classes from what is accepted as a "proletarian" point of view.

Similar lists might as easily be compiled to cover poetry, drama, descriptive writing and literary criticism; and mention should be made of the sudden outcrop of "Left" magazines in which such work regularly appears; but for the present it is possibly sufficient to have suggested in one quarter the abundance of talent to be found in not very dissimilar degree over the whole field. The reader who seeks more detailed information may be strongly recommended both to the American Writers' Congress report (consisting for the most part of the reprinted papers, with a few pages given to the proceedings and discussion) and to the anthology, *Proletarian Literature in the United States.* Each contains some writing which even the well disposed will doubtless wish away; yet each to the alert mind should prove continuously interesting, one as a many-sided, and occasionally in details self-contradictory, account of the theory of "proletarian literature," the other as an equally varied presentation of its practice.

1 *American Writers' Congress.* Edited by Henry Hart. Martin Lawrence. 6s. (In America, International Publishers, $1.00.)

2 *Proletarian Literature in the United States:* An Anthology. With a Critical Introduction by Joseph Freeman. Martin Lawrence. 7s 6d. (In America, International Publishers, $1.00.)

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BOTH theory and practice, it is clear, derive directly from Soviet Russia and the general Marxian view of literature as having an inescapable social origin and function. The writer cannot stand above the battle, but must take sides according to the degree of his social and economic understanding. The proletarian writer is he who accepts the Marxian analysis and solution and forthwith gives his loyalty to the cause of the workers, adopting for the expression of his belief and hope something like the method of what Stalin has termed "socialist realism," which "differs from the realism used by bourgeois writers in that it is supposed not only to reflect 'objective reality' but to represent it in its revolutionary development."

In Jack Conroy's words:

> American proletarian fiction must of necessity deal with prophecy, with hopes, with the decay of society and the manifestations of such decay in the lives of people, with temporary defeats, with temporary triumphs represented by successful strikes and demonstrations of working-class strength.

An odd outlook, it may well appear, to capture so successfully, in capitalist and individualist America of all places, so many adherents, even among those notoriously unstable beings, artists and intellectuals! But no nation can be buffeted as the United States has been by world crisis and emerge wholly unchanged psychologically and spiritually. The sudden plunge from prosperity to poverty, even from ill-paid work to no work at all, forces a new and more intensive study of social factors and relationships. As Joseph Freeman says:

> The experience of the mass of humanity today is such that social and political themes are more interesting, more significant, more "normal" than the personal themes of other eras. Social themes today correspond to the general experience of men.

One would naturally expect the reaction of the artist (who if unstable is so largely because of his unusual sensitivity) to such circumstance to be more violent and less qualified than that of most other men. Moreover, while the development is a recent one—a matter of the last four or five and even more of the last two or three years—the sympathies of the American realist novelist from Howells forward have, as Granville Hicks claims, tended to be with the workers. Both Mr. Hicks and Mr. Freeman assert, necessarily briefly, a realist and revolutionary tradition for the American proletarian writer, shaping itself definitely as such from the first years of the present century forward, feeding unconsciously upon the disillusion of post-War days and coming to full birth in the throes of Depression. The quest of the American realist, says Mr. Hicks, has been always for a clue to "the meaning of the conflict inherent in the society he sought to write about"; and for him Dos Passos was the first major writer to present in his work the "fundamental discovery that American life is a battleground and that arrayed on one side are the exploiters and on the other the exploited."

THE point is an important one. It is necessary to realize that the Marxist is, whatever else he may be, a man with a point of view, a man who knows where he stands, what he wants and, in general, how he means to set about getting it. Conviction and above all conviction which creates order—even if an order of disorder—amid what has previously seemed chaos, is half the battle in literature as in most other matters. Yet here we are treading upon difficult and dangerous ground. The fundamental condition of art is not form but sensibility and the greatest care must perpetually be taken not to permit the one to continue and kill the other in the names of Truth and Discipline.

Much, therefore, must depend upon the individual application of theory and method; and it is interesting, and from the purely literary point of view reassuring, to study in the report of the Congress, the implicit and (in the discussion) explicit debate centering around this matter of dogmatism. One speaker, markedly exceptional, demanded that proletarian literature should deal wholly and solely with the working class, the upper and middle classes being excluded, along with other social outcasts such as tramps, as not "legitimate" subject matter. He denied that "all people are the same" and declared that "in the working class we have a distinct kind of human being . . . with an emotional life and psychology that is different and distinct and with which we should deal." This extreme view received no support, even from the dogmatically inclined though highly-gifted Mr. Gold; and its antithesis found much more frequent expression, notably in the very able papers of Kenneth Burke, Granville Hicks, Dos Passos and, above all, Waldo Frank, whose subsequent unanimous acceptance as chairman of the League seems to give his words a special authority.

> The American revolutionary writer [he said] to act his part, which is to create the cultural medium for revolution, must see life whole. He will have a political creed; if he is a generous man, it will be hard for him to forego some share of the daily political-industrial struggle. But his political orientation must be within, must arise from, his orientation to life as an artist. Any course of action, any creed, lives within the dynamic substance of life itself; and this substance, in all its attributes, is the business of the artist. Therefore, it is proper to state that the artist's vision of life *is* the material of his art.

He was to close the Congress in a similar spirit of revolt against political dictation, emphasizing the writer's

> need to be armed against any premature crystallizations; because the great danger in our American cultural life has been premature crystallization, which is another name for miscarriage.

There was certainly very general agreement that it is not sufficient qualification for the proletarian writer to be a good Marxist. Art must condition, not instruct; propaganda must be wholly implicit; and in detail as in conception the artist's movement must be from the specific to the general and not, as in the case of the man who begins with the "moral," from the general to the specific.

THAT this ideal is by no means always or even most often attained the proletarian writers themselves are the first to admit; yet even in some of the cases where the revolutionary exhortation does, as James T. Farrell complained, seem "glued on to the ending as a slogan . . . which possesses no coherent and vital or necessary relationship with the body of the story," the latter has of itself adequate power to compel attention and feeling. Of course the writing, like the propaganda, is sometimes coarse and crude,

> We dare not read for long,
> We snatch our thought, our song,
> As soldiers do their meat.

But it is plain, even from the very limited selection given in the pages of the anthology, that a new and genuine impulse has been imparted to American writing by this extension of interest and sympathy to new fields of observation and by this identification with hopes and demands larger than the personal. This proletarian writing flows like a swift, if turbulent, river. It has purpose, it has exultation. It is a young movement, eager for life, very sure of Man's capacity to master circumstances, to break the social pattern that we know and to build anew nearer to the heart's desire. Pity and hope are its positive passions (hate and ruthlessness its negative); if its vision is one-sided it is in the main by generosity that it is blinded. It seeks to explore and to present with new immediacy whole realms of American living, hitherto in the main but occasionally glanced into and recorded from above, to make the worker conscious of himself and of his claims as a social unit and as a human being.

Frankly, there is no denying these dynamic chronicles as the stuff of literature. In the anthology none of the fiction pieces, except perhaps a poor selection from Farrell's *The Buddies* and Philip Stevenson's distasteful

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Death of a Century, falls below a level of authentic vitality; and Robert Cantwell's *Hills Around Centralia* and Ben Field's *Cow* are both, after their fashion, superb short stories, while the extracts from Conroy, Dos Passos and Grace Lumpkin serve to remind us of the strength and integrity of the novels from which they are taken. The fifty poems by some thirty authors known and unknown vary a good deal, but only a few lack intensity of feeling and purpose which at least gives them life. In descriptive writing ("reportage") Ben Field's *The Grasshopper Is Stirring,* Agnes Smedley's *The Fall of Shangpo* and *I Was Marching,* by Meridel Le Sueur, show wide range and high quality and John L. Spivak and Joseph North are also represented, though not, unfortunately, E. E. Kisch. The literary criticism section is the least satisfactory of all, the most notable papers being those of Hicks on realism in American fiction (quoted above) and Michael Gold on Thornton Wilder, an attack of definite if mainly historical interest. Joshua Kunitz, Malcolm Cowley and Bernard Smith appear to poor advantage and Edmund Wilson, Kenneth Burke, Newton Arvin, V. F. Calverton and even Matthew Josephson might well, one feels, have been called in to give them support.

THE drama selection is of necessity unsatisfying, since first-class short plays are rare and one scene from a longer play tends to stand indifferently alone. This is the more regrettable since the stage has been a powerful wing of proletarian work, starting some ten years back with the amateur workers' theaters organized by Michael Gold and producing primitive "agitprop" and mass-chant plays and in the professional theater developing from plays of individual protest to plays of social and then revolutionary protest; then in the last two or three years bringing into being the Theater Union and Group Theater in New York and similar active professional theater groups in centers scattered across the whole country. Even the famous — and non-political — Theater Guild was moved to produce, on Broadway, John Wexley's dramatization of the Scottsboro case, *They Shall Not Die.* The outstanding playwright of the movement—one might almost say of the moment—is undoubtedly Clifford Odets, whose *Paradise Lost, Till the Day I Die,* the one-act *Waiting for Lefty* and above all his *Awake and Sing* have caused many to regard him as America's most promising dramatist, as exciting a figure as the younger Eugene O'Neill. Michael Gold, John Dos Passos, John Howard Lawson, Elmer Rice and Paul and Claire Sifton have all helped prepare the way; if the present record is still rather of "magnificent beginnings" than of assured greatness, none the less Clifford Odets, John Wexley, Albert Maltz, Paul Peters and George Sklar (all represented in the anthology, together with Alfred Kreymborg) are undoubtedly doing new and distinctive work.

THE movement as a whole is, one feels, vitally alive, widespread and still in process of growth. There are signs which fully justify Joseph Freeman's claim that it "has already had a profound influence on American letters. The theater, the novel, poetry and criticism have felt the impact of these invigorating ideas, even those writers who do not agree with us have abandoned the ivory tower and begun to grapple with basic American reality, with the social scene." (Witness, possibly, the subject-matter of Sinclair Lewis' latest novel, *It Can't Happen Here.*) There may yet be many others who, tacitly or explicitly, will ally themselves to it and not only those who, like Louis Adamic and in her different way Tess Slesinger, are clearly by implication on its side.

It is a new movement, born in large degree of the immediate stresses of contemporary events; yet it makes out a case for a tradition, a past, for roots in the abiding American realities. Its first fruits are evident. But has it the capacity of development?

Thus far, despite its considerable superficial variety, it has undoubtedly tended to confine itself within relatively narrow psychological limits. Meant to appeal in the main to the worker-audience, it has walked the level of common experience. It has kept its emotions and its conflicts simple. That has been part of its present strength. Can it, from this beginning, reach out to include and cope with the whole range of human experience? Clearly never so long as the dogmatists have their way. The aim of an ultimate art and in its degree of all art whatsoever, is an understanding which comprehends all forms and creeds and which cannot therefore of its nature bind itself to dwell within the limits of even a far more liberal social philosophy than Marxism in practice generally proves to be. Art and dogmatism are as the poles opposed. That is precisely why the attitude of Mr. Frank and certain of his colleagues in this business is so reassuring. As Mr. Frank, in the passage quoted above, so clearly insisted, an artist's policies must always be a secondary matter; as artist, he can serve no one and nothing but the truth of his own vision. To do otherwise is to betray himself and that art which is for him his nearest approach to such reality as he can comprehend. There is no reason why an artist should not be an honest artist and a Marxist at one and the same time, so long as the form of his Marxism does not conflict with his deepest knowledge. Every man must of necessity be blinded or blinkered by his ignorances; he can at best but strive for a perpetual new clarification. Form of some sort is inevitable if only as mental machinery; and to the objective view there seems no obvious reason why Marxism should not function as satisfactorily in that subordinate role—so long as it is kept subordinate—as any other comparable conception. The necessary thing is that it should be kept so.

Anti-Semitism: Fascist Poison Gas

ANTI-SEMITISM: Yesterday and Tomorrow. By Rabbi Lee J. Levinger. Macmillan. $2.50.

THERE is a world-power which is not shown on the maps though it can be found in the index of any history. It is called anti-semitism. Dr. Levinger's book is a scholarly attempt to trace the boundaries of this state, which is a state of mind, to analyze its origin and composition and to find a cure for it. It is a subject which concerns the world at large quite as much as the Jew. For it is becoming increasingly clear that contemporary anti-semitic propaganda is not primarily aimed at the Jew but is a fascist poison gas directed at all the forces which are trying to bring forth a new social order out of decaying capitalism.

On the whole Dr. Levinger has been more successful in his history and analysis than in his proposed remedies. He has avoided oversimplification of the problem along religious, racial, economic or psychological lines, giving due weight to all the factors. This same eclecticism, however, vitiates his concluding chapter: "Is There a Remedy?"

The persecution of racial minorities is a by-product of primitive tribal rivalry which was fundamentally economic. Its subsequent extension into religious and cultural spheres in no way invalidates this principle, for the primitive unity of race, religion and culture, persists ideologically long after it has ceased to exist factually. The Jewish problem differs from other minority problems only in being more comprehensive. As Dr. Levinger points out, the Jew combines in himself the onus of a religious, racial, cultural and economic minority, whereas other minorities usually fall under one or another of these subsumptions. The dispersion of the Jew and the synchronous spread of Christianity, Judaism's bitter rival, made anti-semitism international and gave it the contagion of a universally-shared superstition. In the course of time it became part of the folklore of Europe. Dr. Levinger cites an interesting psychoanalytic interpretation by Dr. Israel Wechsler who thinks that the father and son relationship between Judaism and Christianity is responsible for the ambivalent hate-honor attitude of Christianity toward its parent, Judaism. So far as the modern Jew is concerned, it is no exaggeration to say that he is a product of anti-semitism rather than its cause. Anti-semitism began by excluding the Jew from the run of gainful occupation, forcing him into special fields of economic activity. It ended by attacking him for crowding into those fields.

Dr. Levinger gives consideration to the Marxian contention that race antagonism is a maneuver of the ruling class to divide the

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exploited but he does not realize that, dynamically, it is the only pertinent approach. It may be interesting to explore the psychological, racial and religious components of anti-semitism. But the prepotent factor is the force that sets it in motion. For a variety of reasons anti-semitism flourished in pre-Nazi Germany but it was the politico-economic needs of German capitalism that put it into power. It is Dr. Levinger's conjecture that here in America, if any one group is going to be the butt of the other groups, it will be the Negro rather than the Jew. There is, however, an important economic reason for the middle-class Jew being the candidate rather than the proletarian Negro. In America as in Germany the mass appeal of fascism must be directed to the middle class, and the Jew, as the economic competitor of the middle class, will make an ideal scapegoat. Most likely it will be both—the Jew to mislead the middle class, the Negro to divide the workers.

Dr. Levinger fails to face the issue squarely in his conclusion. He concedes that "the Marxians are right . . . that proper economic conditions for Jew and non-Jew alike will eliminate the economic causes of anti-semitism," and vaguely suggests cooperating with all "liberal parties." But this does not prevent him from saying elsewhere that "the only real approach to anti-semitism is the Zionist movement." Obviously one cannot approve of the Soviet Union's exemplary policy toward its Jewish minority and at the same time endorse the Zionist policy in Palestine toward the Arab majority. He also fails to grasp that the Marxian solution will not "merely eliminate the economic causes of anti-semitism," but will revolutionize the whole political and cultural superstructure of bourgeois nationalism, which is the breeding ground of racial and religious antagonism. The national fate of the Jew like the national fate of the Negro and other oppressed nationalities is indissolubly bound up with the triumph of Communism. The fate of the German-Jewish bourgeoisie has demonstrated what the Jew, of all classes, can expect from decadent capitalism. The Jew owes his emancipation from the medieval ghetto to the revolutionary forces of the eighteenth century.

The only way he can save himself from being thrust back into the ghetto, is by boldly allying himself with the revolutionary forces of the twentieth century.

ALTER BRODY.

Heroine By Accident

SANFELICE, by Vincent Sheean. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.

VINCENT SHEEAN has written a novel of Naples during the Napoleonic era and of a woman who, in spite of herself, played a large role in the Republican movement. The year is 1792, and Napoleon's armies are spread over Europe. But the Egyptian campaign has just ended badly, and in Paris disillusionment and counter-revolution are beginning. The hero Nelson, returning with his fleet from the Battle of the Nile, meets in Naples the British representative, Lord Hamilton, and "Milady" Hamilton, who is of course the notoriously stout and handsome Emma of numerous biographies. It is the role of these Britons to defend the decadent feudal monarchy of Naples against the Jacobin conspirators within and the French who are pressing down from Rome. The flight of the monarchist party to Sicily, the arrival of the French, the setting up of the Republic, the return of the British-Bourbon faction and the crushing of the republic—these are the events with which the novel deals. As Mr. Sheean describes them they are both simplified and intelligible, like good history, and forcible as a news dispatch.

Of the private stories involved with these events, the story of Luisa Sanfelice and her three lovers, I cannot say so much. Luisa is a shy, melancholic aristocrat, a simpleton among bluestockings, a woman dedicated to love in a era fiercely dedicated to politics. Of the three men who love her—the Bourbon sympathizer, Lauriano; the Queen's lieutenant, Baker, and Fernando, the would-be revolutionary—Luisa chooses the last. And through Ferando she is drawn, quite against her will, into a Jacobin apotheosis. Within the new Republic there is a group who secretly plan to deliver the city back to Nelson and the Monarchists. The leader of this conspiracy is Lieutenant Baker, who wants to assure Luisa's safety and so warns her of the coming uprising. This warning she in turn passes on to Fernando, wanting to save *him;* and thus the conspiracy is discovered and crushed, and on the strength of this unintentional piece of patriotism Luisa becomes the unwilling saint of the Jacobins. But when the royal party retake the city, she is guillotined—the heroine of a cause for which she felt no sympathy, the victim of forces she did not understand.

> On one side and on the other they die for a reason, at least, for a cause; you, Luisa Sanfelice, will die for no reason at all. You have done nothing, you have understood nothing in all their causes; you have only lived.

These remarks of the author's describe not only Luisa's role but the tone and motivation of all the fictional part of the novel. Lauriano and Baker are made of much the same, rather sentimental stuff as Luisa; and both, for love of her, are curiously ready to risk their heads as well as their own causes. Such all-for-love motivation seems inadequate in these skeptical times; perhaps it is for this reason that the characters in *Sanfelice* stubbornly refuse to take on any life.

And Fernando, the flighty lawyer, with his inferiority complex—what sort of part does he play in the Neapolitan revolt? A somewhat more conscious one than Luisa but also a meaner one. He has vague Republican leanings to begin with, but it is his passion for Luisa, specifically his desire to establish himself in the Jacobin drawing-rooms in which he finds her, that inspires Fernando to the attitudes of a hot-headed revolutionary. After that his pale face and twitching body are always in flight or in hiding or disguise. The stronger Jacobins are justly scornful of him; and he ends, not with them on the guillotine, but ignobly in exile. If Fernando remains a distinctly "unsympathetic" character, it is not merely because of his weakness, his unbeautiful physical aura, but because the author has taken so little trouble to fathom or explain him.

Even the leading Jacobins are presented in a rather cynical light. There are obvious parallels between them and the middle-class revolutionaries of today, and Mr. Sheean has made a good deal of the parallels. Not until the end does the historical significance of the Jacobins come to light—a significance which Mr. Sheean might well have kept more steadily before the reader. On the other hand and at opposite ends of the social scale are the feudal nobility and the *lazzaroni,* as

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the proletariat of Naples is called. In presenting the nobility, especially the King and Queen, Mr. Sheean departs from the idealizing tradition of historical romance. We get an exceedingly rough and tumble satire on the private lives of the sovereigns, and scurrilous, startling and funny as these pages appear, they are probably very near to historical truth. But whatever the historical truth may be, this picture of the nobility is artistically plausible, because Mr. Sheean has carefully particularized it. When it comes to the *lazzaroni,* however—that degraded, priest-ridden class who sympathized with the monarchy against their own best interests—we see them only in the mass, the lump. They are always "dirty" or "tattered," violent, lazy, lousy, ignorant and stupid. They break into palaces, tear the furniture to pieces, get drunk in the wine-cellar, insult the noble lady—who holds them in check with her proud bearing until the Queen's officer can arrive and put them all to rout with his sword. In a word they behave according to the ancient cliché-pattern of bourgeois historical romance, and their effect in the novel is melodramatic. Willing enough to particularize his descriptions to the nobility, why did not the author give us (for the sake of wholeness and as a guard against distortion) a few individuals from among the *lazzaroni?* As a novel of class warfare, *Sanfelice* suffers from this omission, and despite the very excellent writing, the many pages of sound history, it is a strangely romantic novel to come from an author who knows reality so well, the author of *Personal History.* F. W. DUPEE.

Brief Review

SALKA VALKA, by Halldor Laxness, Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.50. This folk novel is excellent reading despite its occasional clumsiness, for its heroine, Salka Valka, reflects the life of an all but forgotten community of Icelandic fishermen in Oseyri on the Axlarfjord. In Oseyri, a village permanently gray, permanently cold, permanently poverty stricken, life for everyone including Salka is an uncompromising struggle. The center of life is "salt fish." This struggle culminates in a fishermen's strike and the consequent overthrow of the rich merchant Johann Bogesen, owner of the fisheries, paternalistic exploiter of all Oseyri.

From the beginning Salka Valka, the one realist in the book, is found where the situation is most desperate. Arriving in Oseyri the illegitimate child of a shiftless mother, the wretchedness of all the local children is concentrated in her. As secretary of the conservative seamen's union she is the first to oppose the strike. After she has been won over by her lover Arnulder Bjornsson, to the side of the fishermen, she is the last to acknowledge the strike's eventual defeat. In the end, deserted by Arnulder, she chooses to remain in Oseyri, unable to separate her happiness from that of its miserable inhabitants.

The overdrawn or awkward passages in this book are not so frequent as to be of great consequence. What is important is that Mr. Laxness has written a new kind of novel in an old tradition. Where most folk novels derive their strength from the fatalistic attitude they adopt toward their "toil-worn, soil-worn" subjects, this one refuses either to accept their conflicts as inevitable or to sentimentally merge them with time, nature or the surrounding landscape.

MARGARET FROHNKNECHT.

COOLIE, by Madelon Lulofs. Translated from the Dutch by C. J. Renier and Irene Clephane. The Viking Press. $2. A well-dressed, worldly man appears in a small Javanese village. To the adolescent boys he draws an alluring picture of the big city on the coast, shows them money, promises girls, rich food, gambling. They desert their families and follow him to the town. In a coolie recruiting office they answer "yes," as they have been warned, to questions deliberately put in an unfamiliar dialect. They mark crosses on paper; and the legal proprieties having thus been "observed," they enter, in a bewilderment almost equal to that of a colt being broken to the saddle, one of the modern, capitalist forms of slavery—contract labor.

By the time they reach Sumatra, where they are put to work setting up rubber plantations, there are few fibres of their human dignity left unbroken. They turn gradually into the human cattle the plantation work designs them to be.

The book is a damning picture of imperialist exploitation. Miss Luloff's talents are well adapted to show its violation and perversion of the human, as differentiated from the animal, elements of the men; though their animal wants are as little respected. It is, however, made little more than a sad spectacle. The book is brief; its treatment is impressionistic. There is much irrelevant, though skillful description. One cannot help feeling that a more realistic treatment would have suited better, giving more of the mechanism of Dutch imperialist exploitation, more of the organization of plantation life. As it is, the characters and situations are so selected and so thinly given that they seem symbolic rather than representative. The factual elaboration that often makes for the solidity of great fiction, even in psychological studies like those of Proust and James, is lacking here. ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

LECTURES ON CONDITIONED REFLEXES, by Ivan Petrovitch Pavlov. Translated from the Russian by W. Horsley Gantt, with the collaboration of G. Volborth and an Introduction by Walter B. Cannon. Liveright Publishing Co. $3. The reissuance in a volume at a "popular" price of the great Pavlov's classic work is a publishing event of the first importance. Containing, in addition to material from the third Russian edition, five new chapters added by Pavlov, and an excellent short biography by Dr. Gantt, this book should convince thousands of new readers of the vitality and power of a clearly-thought-out materialist approach to the problem of animal—and human—behavior. A single quotation will serve to indicate the nature of this approach—which, incidentally, is characteristic of the whole of Soviet science today:

> Only by proceeding along the path of objective investigation can we step by step arrive at the complete analysis of that infinite adaptability in every direction which constitutes life on this earth. . . . For the naturalist everything is in the method, in the chances of attaining a steadfast, lasting truth, and solely from this point of view (obligatory for him) is the soul, as a naturalistic principle, not only unnecessary for him, but even injurious to his work, limiting his courage and the depth of his analysis.

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The Radio

Microphone Politicians

RADIO has had a profound effect on all of big business. It has wedded toothpaste to blackface comedians, music to motor cars, and packaged foods to parental problems. But among the big businesses politics has been the one that has been most deeply and subtly affected. One suspects that the politicians regard American network radio with feelings that are at least mixed. A coast-to-coast network is a splendid little investment for expanding oratory far beyond its normally audible limits.

The brighter boys in the political camps, however, have come up against the realization that the networks are likely to spread the human voice too far. When a man has spent his life in the successful achievement of a good technique for baby kissing, clambake goodfellowship, back platform railroad train oratory and all the other felicities of the good old process of playing both ends against the middle, it is a bit baffling to be confronted with a microphone which destroys all the opportunities for the non-committal intimacies and which with even greater cruelty makes it necessary for the politician to speak to both ends and the middle all at once.

To promise the farmers of the west the moon, a moon incidentally that was to be furnished at the expense of the workers and even the industrialists of the big eastern cities, was an easy trick for a man to perform in July when he had under his belt the experience acquired back in the eastern cities in June when he promised the workers that he would bring them a moon at the expense of the farmers. The big industrialists, of course, received their assurances long before in the privacy of board rooms, and they, then as now, listened to none of the orations. To make promises which will be heard by both the farmers and the workers and which will sound equally good to both puts a brand new premium on discretion and mental agility.

Radio's contribution to the technique of American political campaigning, therefore, has been the distraction of even the moderately specific campaign promise and the raising of the red herring to a prominence and importance that is without precedent. The situation is simply such. The politician cannot speak to all parts of the country in a single speech and be very much in favor of anything more immediate than the flag, the American home, smaller taxes, bigger and fuller dinner pails, and a rising stock market. He cannot be against anything more immediate than free love, polygamy, atheism, bureaucracy, and the other party. Cynical politicians have often pretended that so far as the American people is concerned, those were always the real political issues. If not specifically those, then others not unlike them.

It is easy to disprove that, for even the shortest memories can go back to the times when repeal would in wet districts be advocated as the means of ending unemployment. In dry states at the same time repeal could be opposed on the grounds that it would make unemployment worse in that the employed would take to drink and lose their jobs. In those days a candidate could be for temperance. Then he could explain according to the temper of the individual neighborhood in which he happened to be speaking that temperance meant prohibition or, where necessary, that temperance meant repeal and individual self-control of drinking habits. On a nation-wide hook-up he would simply have to be for temperance and hope that his dry listeners and his wet listeners would each interpret that courageous stand in a manner favorable to him. To even say he was for temperance would be dangerous. He is more likely to play safe by saying nothing at all on so controversial an issue, appealing to the citizenry for support on the ground that he is unalterably opposed to Moscow.

Al Smith's famous Liberty League dinner speech is the most conspicuous example. The Liberty Leaguers had counted on the boy from the sidewalks to sugar-coat their fascist program with the common touch; but all of Al's experience at fooling some of the people all of the time did him no good when he tackled the job of fooling all the people at one time. The famous retreat on Moscow amounted to a confession of defeat. Similarly, when Ham Fish undertook to face a microphone with an answer to Earl Browder, the radio habit of hiding behind a red herring was so strong upon him that he followed the natural studio inclination to dodge the issue by coming out against the Reds. The comic aspect of that episode, of course, was the fact that his Red was Rex Tugwell. If I may paraphrase Robert Forsythe, Ham Fish found Tugwell more Bolshevik than Browder.

Not long ago the Columbia Broadcasting System won what passes for distinction in broadcasting circles by putting on the air an interview with Governor Alf Landon. The broadcast demonstrated neatly the fact that the broadcasting companies are just about as much interested in talking to the radio audience about political issues as are the campaigners. H. V. Kaltenborn found time to bring to the light of day Governor Landon's opinions on prohibition. He neglected to ask the Republican white hope what he thinks of Hearst. Landon's contribution to the logic of network politics was enlightening. He pointed to the fact that the Democrats say that Roosevelt went into office at the bottom of the depression. Why, he wants the citizens to ask, if that was the bottom, have we not been rising? It is obvious to the Governor of Kansas that from the bottom there is only one way to go—up. Any Kansan, who is not Governor, knows about cyclone cellars; and any adult who is not conducting a political campaign at the microphone knows that it is possible to stay at the bottom without going any place at all.

A growth of demagoguery is a natural accompaniment of the early stirrings of fascism. American radio, however, accents and accelerates the natural process. The greater and more variegated the mass of people that a man must satisfy with a single lie, the broader and the more remote the basis that he must select for that lie. Radio makes much of its "impartiality" in political matters, but that impar-

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tiality is perfectly expressed in the prayer once spoken over NBC's Blue Network:

> Oh, Lord, of all Thy available men,
> Give us a Cleveland or a Coolidge again.

Despite the great following that Father Coughlin built for himself by way of the microphone and despite the President's success with sounding like the pal of the people in his fireside chats, radio is probably overestimated as a political force. The President of NBC on one occasion explained that it was network policy to indulge in large quantities of political broadcasting only in the periods between the national conventions and the presidential elections. It is his theory that except for this period each four years it would be dangerous to run the risk of turning the American citizen's boredom with politics into a possible boredom with radio.

There are, of course, the little talks delivered by Fred Clark, and the news commentators keep the ball rolling with innuendo and petty distortions; but radio's greatest political force is concentrated in the broadcasts which ostensibly are completely removed from politics. The sponsors of radio programs are, by the nature of advertising, the big industrialists of the country. They provide entertainment, and the entertainers, even the dullest, are bright enough to read the names on the pay checks. Have you ever noticed the frequency with which radio comedians find boondoggling comic? R. PETERS.

Current Films

Poppy (Paramount): Unquestionably W. C. Fields at his best. This is an old-time vehicle for Fields, once as a stage show, then as a silent film. It offers him a chance to portray his best-known character: the lovable old carnival faker with a weakness for drink. When he is on the screen it doesn't matter what the film is about, but when the film gets serious about young love it gets in everybody's way.

Secret Agent (Gaumont-British-Roxy): A typical Hitchcock film, but not nearly as good as *The Man Who Knew Too Much* or *Thirty-nine Steps*. There are spies here as always; there is also a professional killer used by the British Government to get rid of the enemy agents. The story suffers from bad conception and too many pulled punches. All that remains is a certain amount of Hitchcock technique—and that's never enough to make a good film.

Two Against the World (Warner Bros.): A sloppy attempt to bring *Five Star Final* up to date.

Seven Brave Men (Amkino-Cameo): A minor Soviet film about the heroic adventures of an Arctic expedition composed of young Soviet scientists. The film is exciting in parts, but too slight in conception to be of major importance. PETER ELLIS.

SANDALS

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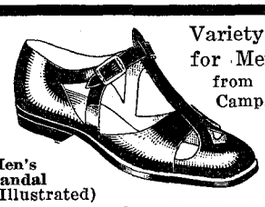

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Between Ourselves

NEXT week's NEW MASSES will contain the fourth installment in the series of intimate notes of the Soviet Union by Joshua Kunitz. Among the "problems" discussed are: Soviet patriotism, life in a Moscow apartment house, bureaucrats, "Japanese dogs" and beggars. From the amount of material accumulated and the enthusiasm which it has aroused, it looks as if the series of notes will not end with the fourth group but will go on to a fifth and possibly a sixth. This week Kunitz sailed for the Soviet Union, where he will conduct a tourist group. In the fall he will resume his post in Moscow as NEW MASSES correspondent.

The next meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES will take place on the evening of July 8 at Room 717A, Steinway Hall, New York. Mr. David M. Freedman, New York attorney, will speak on the Minimum Wage Law and Supreme Court Action. Everyone interested in the work of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES is invited to attend.

THE NEW MASSES for July 7 will contain an article on the present situation in Spain by Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain.

Josephine Johnson ("The Arkansas Terror") is the author of the Pulitzer Prize novel, *Now in November,* published in the fall of 1934. With this article she makes her first appearance in THE NEW MASSES.

Joe Jones, whose drawings in this issue were made during the Arkansas visit they illustrate, has contributed to our pages before. His unemployed artists' mural project in St. Louis was reported in THE NEW MASSES for March 6, 1934: "Unemployed Artists Take the Courthouse" by Orrick Johns.

Moissaye J. Olgin ("Homage to Maxim Gorky"), editor of The Freiheit, is the author of a number of books, among them a monograph on Gorky.

John Strachey ("Collective Security for Peace"), whose cabled dispatches on the European war situation appeared regularly during the tense months of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, is the London correspondent of THE NEW MASSES.

Marie de L. Welch ("The Harvesters, California"), has published widely in magazines. Her volume of *Poems* appeared in 1934. She is a resident of California.

John Mullen ("Armed Camps in Steel") has spent a number of years as an organizer in the steel industry. In recent months he has published stories and sketches on steel, some of which we have published.

Marguerite Young was for several years Washington correspondent for the Associated Press and more recently for The Daily Worker.

Harry Gottlieb's lithograph published in this issue is one of a series of prints issued by the American Artists School, of which he is the director.

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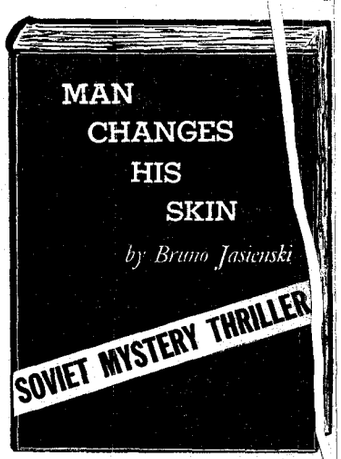

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